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2001 COPA AMERICA

Brazil

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Frank De Boer

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Mallorca

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July 2001

WHATEVER happened to the Beautiful Game? It is a legitimate question to ask as Brazil – the team we all watch through rose-tinted spectacles – prepare to defend the Copa America. And who better to assess Brazil's latest crisis than Pele?

After the drug-taking, passport-faking, ISL-crashing season just gone, it is also time to take stock of the scandals threatening football. It is hard to escape the feeling that the global game is slowly slipping out of control, uncomfortable with its new-found wealth, but unable to deal with the consequences.

Not that there isn't any football to discuss this month: Copa America, exciting League finishes in Italy, Spain and Argentina and, erm, the Confederations Cup.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor (gavin_hamilton@ipcmedia.com)

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Winning in the rain

France triumphed, Japan impressed, but the tournament had plenty of drawbacks. Mike Plastow reports from Tokyo

Looking for options...South Korea's Lee Young-pyo is pursued by Carriere of France during the opening game

THE Confederations Cup, staged in Japan and South Korea, provided France with an opportunity they hardly needed to demonstrate their continuing domination of the global game. The Final pitted two French managers against each other, and the world champions against one of the 2002 World Cup co-hosts, in a fitting spectacle to round off France's successful bid for the triple crown of World Cup, European Championship and Confederations Cup.

Japan, too, revelled in the unexpected success of reaching the Final, and the noisy, friendly atmosphere in the packed Yokohama International stadium contributed to the excitement of a hard-fought if rather one-sided showdown.

But while France and Japan moved confidently on towards 2002, the meek opposition provided by teams such as Brazil, Cameroon and the 1999 champions, Mexico, only confirmed the impression that the Confederations Cup remains a second-rate competition.

Roger Lemerre came without a host of key players, including Zinedine Zidane, Emmanuel Petit, Fabien Barthez, Thierry Henry and David Trezeguet, but left no doubt that the French were there in earnest by defeating South Korea 5-0 in the opening game. Indeed, the world champions' only slip came when they changed their entire starting XI against Australia and lost 1-0.

The unfamiliar faces in the French line-up included Nantes midfielder Eric Carriere, who made his debut against South Korea and scored twice in the 4-0 drubbing of Mexico, and Lyon striker Steve Marlet, whose dramatic flying volley against Korea was the tournament's opening goal. The more experienced Robert Pires was named Player of the Tournament.

While France represented maturity (the Final line-up's average age was 28.5), the rising Japanese (average 24) flew the flag for youth.

The co-hosts came to the tournament after the rollercoaster ride of winning the Asian Cup last October, crashing 5-0 to France in Paris in March, and an ultra-defensive 1-0 loss to Spain in April.

French manager Philippe Troussier was under pressure to prove that Japan could compete with the best, and they did so in style with near perfect defending (no goals conceded until the Final) and some fine goals scored. The last group game presented the extraordinary spectacle of Brazil unsuccessfully chasing a result against group leaders Japan.

The achievement was all the more impressive because of the absence of several key players through injury, including Hiroshi Nanami (Player of the Tournament at the Asian Cup) and Shunsuke Nakamura (J.League Player of the Year). Moreover, Hidetoshi Nakata missed the Final having been recalled for a Serie A game by his club, Roma.

Keeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi can take a lot of credit for the clean sheets, and Shinji Ono's free-kick against Canada was surely the goal of the tournament. Canada keeper Craig Forrest said afterwards he had been beaten only twice like that in 500 first-class games, by Zola and Beckham.

Several new faces also made a big contribution, notably Takayuki Suzuki, who scored twice against Cameroon, and Yasuhiro Hato on the right wing.

Australia, who finished third, posed a fresh challenge to the FIFA computer by beating France and Brazil and losing to South Korea and Japan. "It's a great feeling to have beaten both France and Brazil; we are proud of this achievement," said Australian midfielder Shaun Murphy.

The truth, however, was that the defeats were more indicative of Australia's strength than the victories. The Socceroos were solid in defence but wasteful in attack, and owed their semi-final place to French charity. Against Japan in the last four, Australia struggled to penetrate the tight rearguard, despite adapting better than the skilful but lightweight hosts to the torrential rain.

'As a World Cup warm-up, the tournament lacked a lot – not least the hordes of foreign fans and media'

World-beaters...France lift the Confederations Cup

On the positive side, skipper Paul Okon was a commanding presence and Stan Lazaridis and Clayton Zane, especially, caused plenty of problems for opponents.

The less said about Emerson Leao's Brazil, lacking Rivaldo and Roberto Carlos, the better. The start was promising enough with the defeat of Cameroon, but the 0-0 draws against Canada and Japan were both fair reflections of the play. Aside from some nice work by Fabio in midfield and Ze Maria on the wing, there was little to worry their opponents at the Copa America.

South Korea, under Dutch coach Guus Hiddink, must count themselves the unluckiest team of the tournament after failing to advance despite wins over Mexico and Australia. The Koreans showed plenty of spirit, but like Japan in Paris, never recovered from conceding two early goals against France.

"I'm not satisfied that we didn't advance to the next round," said Hiddink, "but we played well against Mexico and Australia. We have improved and are starting to dominate our games."

Cameroon were highly rated before the tournament but defensive lapses and poor finishing belied that reputation. African Player of the Year Patrick Mboma hardly had a look in as Cameroon fell to Brazil and Japan, and the win over Canada provided poor consolation. Even so, young Samuel Eto'o played with a poise that fully justified his fast-growing reputation.

"Scoring is always an issue in soccer," said Cameroon coach Pierre Lechantre, who was to be surprisingly fired shortly after his side's exit, "and we've been having the same problem in the African tournaments as well."

Canada looked a well-drilled side under German manager Holger Osieck, and benefited from the creative running of Davide Xausa and Jim Brennan. But they could not fight back from their opening 3-0 drubbing by Japan.

The holders, Mexico, simply made up the numbers, suffering three thorough defeats. At least skipper Claudio Suarez picked up his world record-breaking 157th cap, against Australia.

As a warm-up for the World Cup, the Confederations Cup lacked quite a lot, starting with the hordes of foreign fans and media. The local organisation could hardly have failed in the sense that the event barely exceeded Japan's annual Kirin Cup invitation tournament in terms of scale.

Other things that were missing included sophisticated IT media back-up and foreign language assistance for fans – most signs were written only in the local scripts. Visiting supporters should also note the scarcity and general unpalatability of the food within and outside the stadiums.

FIFA officials no doubt noted the inconvenience of air travel between the host countries and the difficulty of changing currencies. There was also plenty of congestion on the access roads to consider, and that dramatic downpour throughout Japan's semi-final with Australia, a hint of things to come at next year's rainy season World Cup. Despite the token roofs, many fans can expect to get drenched next summer.

But the stadiums are impressive and the downpour proved the great quality of the Yokohama pitch. While the running track was effectively submerged, there was hardly a splash on the pitch itself.

If the organisation did not quite win full marks, there was still plenty of cause for satisfaction.

● *Pele on Brazil's troubles, page 17; Brazil's new coach, page 22; Confederations Cup squads and line-ups in World Service, starting page 31.*

2001 CONFEDERATIONS CUP
RESULTS

GROUP A

In South Korea

30.05.01.....France-South Korea (Taegu).....5-0
30.05.01.....Mexico-Australia (Suwon).....0-2
01.06.01.....Australia-France (Taegu).....1-0
01.06.01.....South Korea-Mexico (Ulsan).....2-1
03.06.01.....France-Mexico (Ulsan).....4-0
03.06.01.....South Korea-Australia (Suwon).....1-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FRANCE	3	2	0	1	9	1	6
AUSTRALIA	3	2	0	1	3	1	6
South Korea	3	2	0	1	3	6	6
Mexico	3	0	0	3	1	8	0

GROUP B

In Japan

31.05.01.....Brazil-Cameroon (Ibaraki).....2-0
31.05.01.....Japan-Canada (Niigata).....3-0
02.06.01.....Canada-Brazil (Ibaraki).....0-0
02.06.01.....Cameroon-Japan (Niigata).....0-2
04.06.01.....Brazil-Japan (Ibaraki).....0-0
04.06.01.....Cameroon-Canada (Niigata).....2-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
JAPAN	3	2	1	0	5	0	7
BRAZIL	3	1	2	0	2	0	5
Cameroon	3	1	0	2	2	4	3
Canada	3	0	1	2	0	5	1

Semi-finals

07.06.01.....Japan-Australia (Yokohama).....1-0
07.06.01.....France-Brazil (Suwon).....2-1

Third-place play-off

09.06.01.....Australia-Brazil (Ulsan).....1-0

FINAL

10.06.01.....Japan-France (Yokohama).....0-1

Foot in...Japan's Uemura vies with Australia's Muscat during the rain-drenched semi

World Soccer spotlight on the events that threaten the credibility of the world game

Keir Radnedge
COMMENTARY

Blatter toughs it out

WHEN Sepp Blatter bounced, triumphant, from FIFA Congress in Paris three years ago as leader of the world game he could not, in his wildest nightmares, have expected the football roof to collapse on him in such spectacular fashion.

Never mind 'just' ISL. Unmitigated disasters have pursued Blatter ever since he outmanoeuvred UEFA's Lennart Johansson to lay his hands on the poisoned chalice.

Blatter must take a measure of responsibility for some of the troubles. Others have emerged from the murky shadows in ways he could not have foreseen. But all have conspired together to undermine the foundations of his authority and his prospects of survival – whether he faces a vote of no confidence at FIFA's extraordinary congress in Buenos Aires in July or a presidential challenger on the eve of the World Cup finals in Seoul next May.

The very face of those finals will be influenced by events now unfolding in Europe over the issues of false passports and dope-taking. Many star names may well be ruled out of the World Cup finals because of suspensions for one or other offence. Argentina's Juan Veron leads the list of alleged culprits in the passport fiasco, which has major criminal as well as sporting overtones. The likes of Edgar Davids and Frank De Boer represent the mere tip of an iceberg in the doping arena.

The likelihood is that many more famous culprits or victims will be unmasked as police and immigration departments realise that they have been duped by the greed of football's most sinister hangers-on.

As regards both passports and doping, Blatter is as much a victim as many of the players. But the issues add to the impression that football has escaped the control of its leaders and rulers. Blatter is the helpless figurehead.

Close to home come two of his pet projects that have run into the buffers. One is the staging of the World Cup every two years; the other is the unified international calendar, which is supposed to be due for ratification in Buenos Aires on the eve of the World Youth Cup Final.

To start with the World Cup staging. Blatter had an awkward first year in the role of president. He was considered by many observers – particularly, of course, in antagonistic Europe – as much too triumphalist, which sat badly in the wake of unsubstantiated smears about how he had persuaded some African and Asian delegates to vote for him rather than Johansson.

The infamous interview with a Swiss newspaper in which Blatter raised the prospect of a World Cup every two years exacerbated European impatience. FIFA's internal diplomacy is a delicate matter at the best of times, and this was not the best of times. FIFA's European delegates were infuriated that Blatter had launched his vision without any prior reference or warning.

Now, Blatter had used his previous role as chief executive and general secretary in just such a manner – as a podium from which he could air his own personal ideas and dreams. Then, however, he was merely a paid official (albeit an important one). Now, he was FIFA president with a very different constituency, which had sensitive and easily irritated egos.

Initially Blatter tried to bluster his way through. It didn't work. In due course, he pushed the concept into the cupboards in the corridors of power. But the spectre remains alive in enough bruised memories to haunt his presidency. It was not so much the idea – hopeless as it was – but the manner of its projection that caused him so much unnecessary damage.

Nor are prospects good for the unified calendar. The idea was to align the various regional championships and World Cup qualifying events so as to reduce the club versus country squabbles. The non-European nations took to the idea, but Europe has no intention of falling in.

To work effectively, a unified calendar depends on the major Western European leagues reorganising their timings and schedules, but too much television and sponsorship money rests on league fixtures in Western Europe staying exactly where they are. A unified calendar will become effective only if the rest of the world falls into line with Europe – and that, for social, cultural and climatic reasons, is beyond the realms of possibility.

Achieving a unified calendar was Blatter's first target as president and one he is unlikely to carry through. The prospect is, in any case, that he will no longer be FIFA president by the time the world body attempts to put it into effect.

FIFA did not even cover itself in roses in the transfer system negotiations with the European Union. That should have been an easy one. UEFA's ostrich-like attitude to the European Union and European Commission

Under scrutiny...Blatter will face a torrid time at Congress

positively invited FIFA to step in and sort it all out. Even then, an injudicious statement too many aroused Europe's ire and FIFA was on the back foot all the way to a deal.

Simultaneously we had the 2006 World Cup hosting fiasco. Blatter went too far out on a limb in support of South Africa – his failure to deliver cost him support in Africa and respect everywhere else.

Some of the above may count as unfortunate, some as mere accidents. But the ISL business goes right to the heart of Blatter's reign in Zurich.

I will not go into the full details yet again. Suffice it to say, for new readers, ISL was set up by Adidas boss Horst Dassler in 1982 to act as FIFA's World Cup marketing agent with regard to both sponsorship and television rights. Each time the contract came up for renewal it went through 'on the nod' to the increasing unease of UEFA and anger of other, envious, agencies.

In due course, ISL – or rather, its parent company, ISMM – changed hands a couple of times. It maintained an iron grip on the lucrative World Cup business, however, which may appear odd in the circumstances with the benefit of hindsight.

ISMM's recent attempts to diversify into other sporting activities provoked its recent bankruptcy. Blatter says this will cost FIFA 'only' around £40million. That, presumably, is before adding up the £1m-plus legal fees as the sorry mess battles its way through the Swiss courts.

FIFA claims all the World Cup sponsorship rights revert automatically to the world governing body. But one Swiss legal expert has concluded that the rights contracts must remain assets of ISL, the sponsor and TV companies must go on paying ISL, the monies will fund some of the company's debts and FIFA will never see as much as one Swiss franc.

That is the Doomsday scenario that could cost FIFA as much as £570m and undermine the entire financial foundation of the world game. The World Cup would survive but many of FIFA's other tournaments would then follow the World Club Championship (another Blatter baby) into oblivion. The Goal project, which hands out £700,000 cheques to developing world FAs, would also be at risk.

Should Blatter have kept a tighter rein on ISL's activities? Should he pay the price for failing to do so with his job? If so, who steps up in the interim? Julio Grondona, the senior vice-president? But he is president of FIFA's finance committee and might have been expected, even more than Blatter, to have kept a beady eye on ISL.

But then, who knew what about ISL? Does UEFA have clean hands? After all, ISL was the European federation's marketing agent for the European Championship. This means UEFA is one of ISL's creditors and, as such, may be under legal imperative to fight any attempt by FIFA to regain the World Cup commercial rights.

The pressure is building on Blatter. UEFA confronted him with 25 probing questions at the FIFA executive committee called to consider the fall-out from the ISL crash. Days later, Blatter faced an injunction in a German court from the Dassler family complaining at his linking it to one of ISL's apparent 'slush fund' accounts.

Suddenly, his friends appear scarce. Even Michel Zen-Ruffinen, whom Blatter promoted to general secretary on his own elevation, is reported to be working in a very far-flung corner of FIFA House in Zurich.

I believe Blatter will survive Buenos Aires but probably then seize the initiative and decide to step aside in a year's time to put an end to this chapter of accidents. All, as FIFA puts it, for the good of the game.

> 'The passport and doping issues add to the impression that football has escaped the control of its leaders and rulers. Blatter is the helpless figurehead'

COUNTDOWN TO CRISIS

JULY 4, 1996 Rights to 2002 and 2006 World Cups sold by FIFA to the German Kirch group for £1.46billion.

EARLY 2001 ISL/ISMM admits financial difficulties after diversifying into other sports, spending £160m on the TV rights to the ATP tennis tour and £60m on the CART motor-racing series.

MAY 18 ISL/ISMM files for bankruptcy after a proposed rescue by French media giant Vivendi collapses. Debts are estimated at £300m.

MAY 21 World Club Championship, due to be held in Spain in late July/early August, is cancelled after Brazilian marketing company Traffic fails to find any sponsors.

MAY 24 UEFA calls for an emergency FIFA executive committee to discuss the crisis.

JUNE 1 It emerges that £43m paid to ISL by the Brazilian TV company Globo has been diverted into a secret Swiss bank account. Blatter insists he has no access to it.

JUNE 11 UEFA president Lennart Johansson issues 25 questions to Blatter ahead of the emergency executive. The questions include: "When were you first aware of the financial difficulties facing ISL/ISMM and what steps were taken at that time to inform the FIFA executive committee of the potential problems ahead?"

Another asks for "a detailed breakdown of the current situation regarding the ownership and exploitation of the marketing and television rights sold to ISL/ISMM; what rights have been sold by ISL/ISMM; at what price in each case; and what inventory remains to be sold?"

JUNE 12 Reports from Switzerland suggest the 2002 and 2006 World Cup TV rights could revert to ISL's creditors, leaving FIFA with huge debts.

JUNE 13 Blatter survives an emergency FIFA executive meeting in Zurich without being subjected to a vote of no confidence. "If we are not all friends then we are all comrades," he says. Johansson is absent through illness.

JUNE 15 UEFA chief executive Gerhard Aigner accuses Blatter of misleading the FIFA executive. "I think the figures [FIFA losses as a result of the ISL crash] are higher than announced so far," he says.

Blatter comes out fighting, saying: "Three-quarters of my executive would have been happier with Johansson. Running the game is like running an animal that is partly lion and partly crocodile, but I will survive and I will fight."

JULY 6-7 FIFA Congress, Buenos Aires. Blatter faces possible vote of no confidence.

SCANDAL No. 2

Nandrolone: Big names in the frame

HOLLAND captain Frank De Boer, his international team-mate Edgar Davids and Portuguese skipper Fernando Couto all face the prospect of missing next year's World Cup finals – presuming their teams qualify – after testing positive for the banned anabolic steroid nandrolone.

Juventus midfielder Davids and Lazio defender Couto, who both failed drugs tests after Serie A matches, have had their 18-month Italian bans extended worldwide by FIFA. They now face a long legal battle in the Italian courts to reduce their punishments.

Davids and Couto are the two biggest names to fall foul of Italian doping controls in the past season. Another seven Serie A and B players have been given similar bans after testing positive for nandrolone. They are Stefano Torrisi (Parma), Jean-Francois Gillet (Bari), Christian Bucchi and Salvatore Monaco (both Perugia), Nicola Caccia and Stefano Sacchetti (both Piacenza), and Andrea Da Rold (Pescara).

In Spain, De Boer plans to appeal against a one-year ban imposed by UEFA after testing positive for nandrolone following Barcelona's UEFA Cup quarter-final against Celta Vigo.

The positive tests of Davids and De Boer led some to suspect that food supplements used by the Dutch national team were to blame. But laboratory tests proved negative.

Both Davids and De Boer have received strong backing from their national team colleagues, with Holland coach Louis Van Gaal calling for more scientific research on nandrolone.

"There hasn't been even a sense of agreement among doctors so far," said Van Gaal. "A lot of research has to be done on this issue before you can draw conclusions. I'm not qualified enough to say something about it, but I believe Edgar and Frank are innocent.

"However, I'm sure that football isn't free of drugs and sometimes I have my doubts. But as a coach I far more believe in making choices on the pitch and so far there isn't a substance to improve players in that way."

Davids has declined to talk to the press about his ban, but De Boer, as he explains below, has been more open.

Angry... Frank De Boer

WORLD SOCCER: Is it difficult to focus on football at the moment?
FRANK DE BOER: Not at all. The whole thing isn't bothering me at the moment, because I know I'm innocent. I'm still convinced that it will end well. Why shouldn't it be like that? So for me football isn't a distraction at the moment. I'm not having sleepless nights and it's not affecting my game.

Why are you convinced that this story will end happily?
Because I haven't done anything wrong! At least, not anything I'm aware of.

So it's possible that you have used drugs without knowing it?
What I have been using has been recorded and everything has been researched. It's not in the food supplements of the Dutch national team and my personal stuff will be investigated in a laboratory in Groningen. The result could take a while because I understand that the whole place has to be rebuilt to do this research. So that means that there are three options. Either my body is producing it, it is in my food, or something went wrong with food supplements.

Did you have high expectations of the B [follow-up] sample?
No, I've said from the start that I had no illusion that suddenly something would have been completely different. You've got to be realistic about these things.

If you were playing in Serie A, the punishment could have been worse.
Well, it's complicated. But maybe it's an advantage that Edgar's and Couto's bodies also contain nandrolone. At least it has started the whole discussion about nandrolone.

So it concerns more players than just Frank de Boer?
Yesterday [De Boer was talking at a training camp with the national team for the match against Estonia], Ruud Van Nistelrooy came to my room and started asking questions. What was I thinking when I heard the news? What was my reaction? Suddenly he realised that being accused of using drugs without being aware of it could happen to him as well. What was my first reaction? 'Me, Frank De Boer, tested positive? There has got to be a mistake!' But look what has happened.

'This is like a boxing match. There are a lot of rounds and in the end we'll win' Frank De Boer

Aren't you afraid of being used as an example by the authorities, so they can take a firm line on doping?
No, that would be a major risk for UEFA. It will be proved that I'm innocent, and then they will be liable for a heavy financial claim.

What has upset you most about this episode?
That people are questioning my integrity. My conscience is clear and

Failed test...Fernando Couto

still I'm reading headlines like: 'He is acting the injured innocent.' I would like to put those people six feet under.

Barça president Gaspart is backing you. Is that important?
Absolutely, it's important that the club has kept faith in me. I have got to know Gaspart since arriving in Barcelona; he knows what kind of a person I am. So if he says something like that then I set value by his words.

But isn't there anything about taking drugs in your contract?
I don't know but I suppose so. It's probably in the small print but I haven't given it any notice. And it isn't necessary to look it up, because I know I'm innocent.

So you plan to appeal?
Yes, this is like a boxing match. There are a lot of rounds and I'm sure in the end we'll win. I'm disappointed because I'm innocent. If someone is innocent they can't be sanctioned. It's very tough but we're going to fight until the end, along with Barcelona, my lawyers and anyone who wants to help me.

Interview: Klaas-Jan Droppert

Confusion reigns

SCANDAL No. 3

THIS SUMMER, Europe's leading players will stretch out on the continent's beaches and dream of success in next year's World Cup. Meanwhile, their lawyers will be working overtime on the scandal that has engulfed European football over the past 10 months and now threatens to prevent players from taking part in the 2002 World Cup.

Lazio's Argentinian midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron faces the prospect of missing next year's finals after the Italian state prosecutor Carlo Porceddu recommended that he be banned from football for two years. The ban scuppered Veron's proposed move to Manchester United.

Veron is the most high-profile case in a scandal that has led to a number of Serie A clubs and players (including Veron and Inter's Uruguayan Alvaro Recoba) being investigated by the Italian state judiciary.

Udinese, whose trip to Poland for a UEFA Cup tie last September sparked the controversy when their Brazil-born player Warley was discovered with fake papers, have been fined £300,000.

Last month's decision by the Italian federation to remove the distinction between European Union foreigners and non-EU players effectively draws a line under the 'Passportopoli' scandal, but not before those recommended for punishment by state prosecutor Porceddu take their cases on the long and protracted journey through the appeal courts.

In Spain, in contrast to Italy, the players caught up in the scandal have been from lesser First Division clubs. Perhaps as a result, the Spanish League has been slow to act.

The strongest punishment handed out has been to Las Palmas's Alvaro and Baiano, who have been banned for six months, starting next season. The Brazil-born pair began the season registered as EU citizens, despite having played for Brazil at the Olympics.

It was only when Las Palmas re-registered the players in January that suspicions were aroused, and it emerged that the pair had been using forged Portuguese passports.

Las Palmas, however, have avoided punishment from the Spanish federation, who dismissed calls from fellow relegation strugglers Racing Santander and Numancia to have their results against Las Palmas annulled. The federation says that all complaints against another side have to be registered within 48 hours of the match in question.

The Spanish appear to be taking their lead from the Italians. Two players who have been caught out, Desio Cesar Toledo of Espanyol and Rayo Vallecano's Gustavo Bartelt, were on loan from Italian clubs Udinese and Roma respectively. Their faked documents came to light only as a result of investigations in Italy.

In England, an inquiry into the passports of more than 80 foreign players is not expected to report until the autumn. Chief suspect is Newcastle's Peruvian international midfielder Nolberto Solano, who has been playing in the Premier League as an EU player courtesy of a Greek passport.

Facing ban...Lazio's Veron

In France, the first country to tackle the scandal when they suspended Saint-Etienne's Alex and Maxym Levytskyi, lawyers have successfully appealed (for the time being at least) against the seven-point penalty imposed on the club. However, this was not enough to save *Les Verts* from relegation.

In all cases, it has been the players who have been punished most severely. Their clubs and their agents – the people largely responsible for organising the fake passports – have escaped punishment.

Gavin Hamilton

FINANCIAL FOOTBALL

Euro stars...Bayern Munich

Bayern time

The future's bright, the future's Bavarian, says Ben Hamilton

FOR AN INDUSTRY in danger of being crippled by telephone-number wages, Bayern Munich's Champions League triumph must have seemed like a fairytale.

Here was a club that had refused to buckle under the demands of players and agents, and had walked off with European football's most lucrative prize. In doing so, they made a mockery of every 'to be the best, we must pay the best' justification ever uttered by football boards across the continent.

Behind Bayern's success lies a frugality other clubs can only envy. While player salary information is very rarely released, it is common knowledge that Bayern are very small spenders by current standards. The team that took the field for the 1999 Champions League Final were on a collective wage of £6 million – barely £500,000 a man. Opponents Manchester United, whose total wage bill (club and plc) for that year was £36.3m, were on three times that amount.

And while United had bought Jaap Stam and Dwight Yorke for a combined fee of over £24m the previous summer, Bayern spent only £3.3m, a risible figure considering their success.

Although they spent £11.1m and £8.8m over the next two seasons, Bayern have spread their money thinly. Their transfer record is still only £5.7m, less than that of, say, Wimbledon, of the English First Division.

But while Bayern are still light years behind their competitors in terms of outlay, they are very much on a level playing field in terms of spending power. In the 1998-99 season, they had the second biggest turnover of any club in the world, with total revenue of £83.5m.

Perhaps they could have a claim to be the richest club. General manager Uli Hoeness said recently that, should the club float, the estimated value would be £475m; Manchester United's current market capitalisation is £441.6m.

High-margin revenue – that generated by sources which require little input, like sponsorship and TV – comes easily to a club with the stature of Bayern. They have five million supporters in Germany alone, as well as 12.8 million 'sympathisers'. They sell around 300,000 replica kits a year through a deal with Adidas worth £3.8m annually. And their main sponsorship deal, with Opel, is worth £6.3m a year (not including bonuses) – which used to be the most valuable in the world until English clubs played catch-up.

Then there is the Champions League. Having finished top of the combined prize money and TV money stakes last year with £17.9m, despite only making the semi-finals, Bayern are expected to repeat the feat when the 2000-01 figures are released, with estimated revenue of £25.2m. The increase is attributable to victory in the Final and the early elimination of the other German clubs, which gave Bayern a 45 per cent share of the country's pool of £25.9m.

German football finance analyst Ingo Kipker believes Bayern's success is down to "very good management". He singles out four men in particular – Hoeness, vice-president Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, and president Franz Beckenbauer. It is worth noting that all but Hitzfeld are former Bayern players.

Beckenbauer, according to Kipker, is the key. He is "one of the most respected men in Germany – from lifting the World Cup as a player in 1974, winning it as a manager in 1990, to securing it for his country to deliver in 2006 – a complete success story".

Bayern have perfected a brand of 'total management', with the four playing a number of differing roles not usually associated with their job description.

> 'Behind Bayern's success lies a frugality many clubs would envy – not bad for a club estimated to be worth £475m'

Beckenbauer is equally at home in the dressing-room as the boardroom. Following the defeat by Lyon in a Champions League second phase group game, he stormed in and asked the players why they had not chosen factory working or baking as their vocation as they clearly were not footballers.

Hoeness, controller of the club's finances, is equally at home on the bench. As a result he is constantly aware of players' needs and of potential trouble-makers. Former player Mario Basler complained he was never able to go out in Munich. Before important games Hoeness would distribute Basler's mugshot to the city's nightclubs offering rewards to partygoers who could make a positive identification in the flesh.

Under Hitzfeld, players have enjoyed success that has eluded them at clubs where the wages are higher. However, several, notably striker Giovane Elber, have indicated their intention to leave Bayern.

But the club will not be pushed about. Beckenbauer recently declared the bidding for Elber would have to start at £15.7m. They have already spent £10.6m on reinforcements. Watch out Europe – that's big time by Bayern standards.

Ben Hamilton writes for Soccer Investor *(www.soccerinvestor.com)*

Paul Gardner

GLOBAL VIEW

No easy way to stop the over-age cheats

TALK ABOUT historic goals – Hernan Medford's winner for Costa Rica sent Mexico crashing to their first World Cup qualifying defeat in the Azteca stadium – ending an unbeaten record stretching back nearly 30 years and 54 games!

But Medford hasn't always come off looking so good. In 1990 FIFA hit Costa Rica with a two-year ban from age-group competitions – and Medford was at the centre of the scandal.

Earlier that year he had been a member of Costa Rica's surprisingly successful team at the World Cup finals in Italy. The records showed that he was not exactly a key player – he played only 80 minutes. The same records also revealed that Medford's birth date was 23/5/68.

Problem. In 1985 Medford played for Costa Rica in the first Under-17 World Championship in China – when his birth date was given as 23/8/68. A discrepancy of a mere three months – between May 23 and August 23 – but it made a world of difference; the later date meant he was born after the August 1 cut-off point and was therefore eligible for the tournament.

FIFA's probe showed the later date had been faked to make Medford eligible. Costa Rica were duly punished, and Medford became the first casualty of the age controversy that has bedevilled the Under-17 tournament.

In 1989 Saudi Arabia won the competition in Scotland with a team that was widely suspected of using over-age players, but when Portuguese coach Carlos Queiroz went public with his suspicions, FIFA threatened to send him home.

FIFA did investigate Saudi Arabia a year later, but abandoned the probe owing to "lack of proof".

An odd business. I was told FIFA demanded to see photographs of the Saudi team then trying to qualify for the 1991 tournament, and told the Saudis they were "unacceptable". Whatever – the Saudis, despite having won their preliminary group, simply disappeared from the Asian qualifiers.

Before the 1997 tournament in Egypt, the then general secretary Sepp Blatter said that, for FIFA, age-cheating was now "a dead issue".

But the rumours and the whispers have never gone away. Juan Santisteban, the former Real Madrid defender who coached Spain in four Under-17 World Championships, has repeatedly spoken out. After his team lost the 1991 Final to Ghana, he told me: "Ghana is a great team but – and I speak from all my years of experience – they are using over-age players."

In 1995 Portugal lost 2-0 to Ghana in the quarter-finals, prompting Portuguese coach Rui Cacador to declare: "The Ghana players cannot be the age they say they are...FIFA must act."

FIFA has done what it can. It now examines passports and birth certificates, and threatens massive punishments (Mexico, caught cheating at the Under-20 level, were banned from Italia 90).

More direct and drastic measures have been taken by the Asian Football Confederation. In a highly controversial move in 1996 it introduced X-ray testing of wrist bones during its qualifying tournament. Such testing is generally acknowledged to be an uncertain way of determining age. According to Dr Adam Poznanski, Professor of Radiology at Northwestern University in Illinois: "The margin of error – 13 months either way – is too great to allow certainty."

Inevitably, the 1996 tests came up only with hints and possibilities. "Out of 50 boys tested, there were seven whom we considered doubtful," said the AFC general secretary Peter Velappan.

Their countries were informed but no action was taken. Velappan admitted some of the seven might even have played in the 1997 tournament.

No tests were carried out for the 1999 tournament, but were re-introduced at last year's qualifiers – with devastating results. Sixteen players – five from Iran, six from Oman, two from Thailand and three from Bangladesh – were declared to be overage. They were banned from international football for two years, their countries were fined £7,000 each and banned from the 2002 Asian Youth tournament.

"For 15 years we have been asking national associations to teach the players to be honest but this has been ignored," said Velappan.

The AFC is sure its results will stand up to challenge because the assessments on the cheating players were considerably beyond the maximum two-year margin of error. The banned players – supposedly 16 years old – were reported as registering closer to 20 on the X-rays.

Inevitably, the AFC has been threatened with legal action. The Thais said they were prepared to sue Velappan "for giving Thailand a bad reputation worldwide through this matter".

They also raised the awkward point that even though FIFA organises the Under-17 World Championship, it does not itself use X-ray tests to ensure age compliance.

There's plenty more to come on this one.

NOTES AND QUOTES

"Our team plays without imagination and daring, the two characteristics that have always been the strong points of Brazilian football."
Zico on Brazil's dismal Confederations Cup.

"It's a pity FIFA did not protect its own competition and allowed Nakata to leave for Italy."
Japan coach Philippe Troussier grumbles after FIFA gave the green light for his star player, Hidetoshi Nakata, to return to Roma on the eve of the Confederations Cup Final, thus missing his country's big day.

Philosopher...Capello

"We are calm and at peace."
Roma boss Fabio Capello finds Zen following a touchline bust-up with disgruntled substitute Vincenzo Montella during a Serie A game at Napoli.

"I've no grounds to believe I'll not be in Turin next year."
Famous last words from Juventus coach Carlo Ancelotti.

ROUND-UP

Deschamps swaps playing for coaching

Change of role...Deschamps (right) has taken a coaching post at Monaco

DIDIER DESCHAMPS, winner of the World Cup, European Championship and Champions League, has ended his playing career to coach Monaco. The 32-year-old, who replaces the sacked Claude Puel, made his decision after a disappointing year with Valencia.

"My season with Valencia was very difficult," Deschamps explained. "I came full of hopes but it did not work out the way I expected."

The former France captain, who numbers Nantes, Marseille, Bordeaux, Juventus and Chelsea among his former teams, was officially named technical director of the Principality club to circumvent the fact that he does not have a coaching diploma, a pre-requisite for any head coach in France.

COACHES ON THE MOVE

FC COPENHAGEN have threatened to take legal action against **Roy Hodgson** after he quit the club for Udinese with a year still to run on his contract. The 54-year-old Englishman led FC Copenhagen to the Danish title last season, adding to his earlier championship successes with Halmstads and Malmo in Sweden.

The job at Udinese is Hodgson's second in Italy, following his stint at Internazionale in the 1990s. He takes over from Luciano Spalletti, who had replaced Luigi De Canio in March.

Jupp Heynckes has taken the reins at Athletic Bilbao following the departure of Txetxu Rojo. The German is now in his second spell with the Basque club, having previously been in charge during the early 1990s. Heynckes parted company with Benfica just four games into last season after a poor start.

Macedonia's top two sides have both announced new coaches. **Ekrem Maglajlija** has taken over at champions Sloga Jugomagnat from Gjore Jovanovski, who was recently appointed national team boss.

Meanwhile, there has been a dramatic turn of events at Skopje rivals Vardar. Former Macedonia boss **Gjoko Hadzievski** has joined on a one-year contract following the 10-day tenure of Yugoslav **Dusan Savic**. He stepped down because it was felt his nationality might make him a particular target for ethnic Albanian rebels, currently involved in fighting close to the Macedonian capital.

Savic, who had replaced Zarko Odzakov at Vardar, has since joined Slovenian club Mura Murska Sobota.

In Greece, former French national team boss **Henri Michel** has taken over at Aris Salonika. Michel was recently fired as coach of the United Arab Emirates.

Moldova coach **Aleksandr Matiura** stepped down following the 6-0 World Cup qualifying defeat by Sweden. It was the country's heaviest loss since independence.

Georgia were also looking for a new boss after co-coaches **David Kipiani** and **Revaz Dzodzuashvili** were fired. The team had lost their last four World Cup qualifiers. At club level, **Givi Nodiya** has rejoined Dinamo Tbilisi, the club he led to the Double in 1994 and 1995.

Frenchman **Robert Corfou** was the surprise appointment as Cameroon's national coach, following the sacking of Corfou's compatriot **Pierre Lechantre**. He was fired in the wake of Cameroon's disappointing showing at the Confederations Cup, having only been reappointed to the post in May. Lechantre had led the team to victory in the 2000 African Nations Cup before giving way to Jean-Paul Akono in October.

Corfou coached a French amateur side before being appointed to help develop youth football in Cameroon in May.

COACHES STAYING ON

Raynald Denoueix, who led Nantes to the French title in the season just ended, has extended his contract until 2005. He joined the club in 1997 with a five-year deal.

INTERNATIONAL INS AND OUTS

Uncapped Deportivo La Coruna forward **Diego Tristan** was named in the Spain squad to face Bosnia and Israel at the start of June.

Luciano Zauri, the Atalanta midfielder cleared of fixing the result of an Italian Cup match earlier this season, was the new face in the Italy squad to play Georgia.

Schalke midfielder **Niels Oude Kamphuis** was included in the Holland squad to meet Estonia.

Grasshopper defender **Bruno Berner** and Lugano forward **Joel Magnin** received their first call-up to the Switzerland squad, for the ties against the Faroe Islands and Slovenia.

CSKA Sofia forward **Vladimir Manchev** was in the Bulgaria party for the first time, for the June World Cup qualifiers.

Georgian midfielder **Gocha Jamarauli** refused to join up with the national team squad for the Italy and Hungary games because he feels he spends too much time on the bench.

Ukraine boss Valerii Lobanovskyi included **Olexander Spivak** (Zenit St Petersburg) in his party to face Norway and Wales, while his Russia counterpart, Oleg Romantsev, called up CSKA Moscow forward **Denis Popov** for the games against Yugoslavia and Luxembourg.

Azerbaijan coach Igor Ponomarev called veteran Shamkir defender **Mekhman Yunusov** into his squad to face Turkey and Slovakia, more than three years after his last appearance. The newcomers were Shamkir full-back **Azer Mamedov** and Shafa keeper **Elshan Poladov**.

A trio of uncapped players were included in the Macedonia squad to meet Moldova and Turkey – keeper **Muarem Zekir** (Vardar Skopje), defender **Goran Jovanovski** (Sloga Jugomagnat) and Bulgaria-based midfielder **Vanco Trajanov** (Velbazhd).

Extended stay...Owen Hargreaves

PLAYERS STAYING ON

Young Bayern Munich midfielder **Owen Hargreaves** has won a two-year contract extension.

OBITUARY

Former Barcelona keeper **Javier Urruticoechea** has been killed in a car crash at the age of 49. The Basque-born player, popularly known as 'Urruti', played for Barça between 1981 and his retirement in 1988. He also won five caps for Spain.

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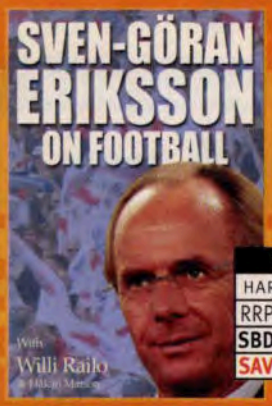

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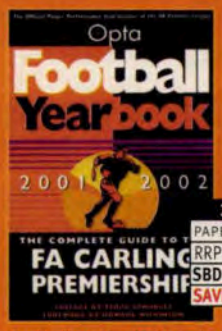

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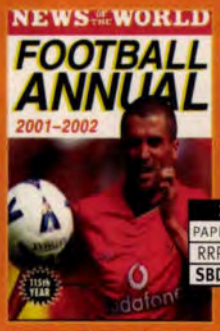

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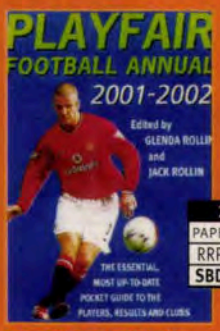

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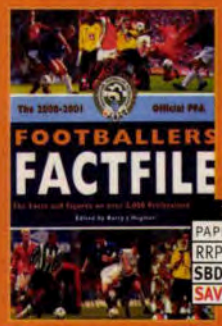

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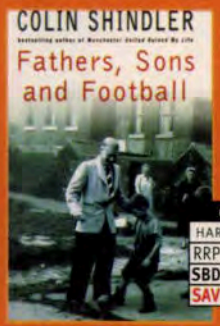

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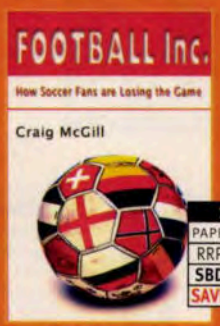

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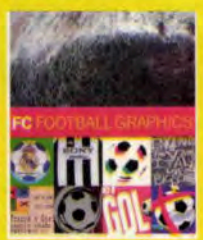

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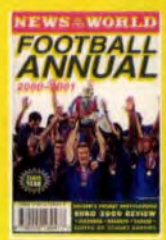

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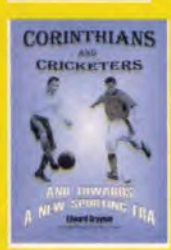

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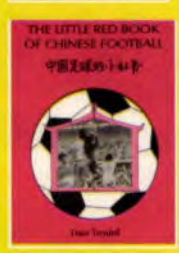

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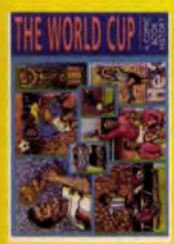

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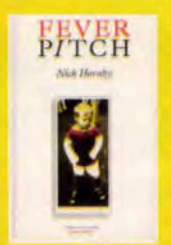

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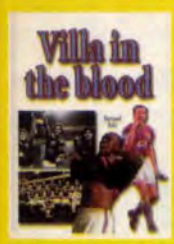

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OPINION

Write off Brazil at your peril!

40º Copa América
Colombia 2001
11 al 29 de julio

RONALDO will, I believe, be fit and back to his best to lead Brazil's attempt to win the World Cup for a record fifth time in Japan and Korea next year.

I have talked with Ronaldo and, even though he has been out for a year, I am confident he will prove what a great player he really is.

Three years ago Brazil lost the World Cup Final against France after the problems over Ronaldo's state of health. I do not believe that can happen again.

People are surprised when I talk about Ronaldo in these terms. They want to know why I can be so confident. I tell them: this is easy because Ronaldo is a great, natural footballer and I believe in him.

I met up with him a number of times while he was back in Brazil recovering from the operation he needed after he injured his knee again in last year's Italian Cup Final. Some people said he would never play again but I never believed them.

Ronaldo seems to have been around for a long time. He was in Brazil's squad at the 1994 World Cup finals even though he spent the tournament on the substitutes' bench. So people think he is older than he is. In fact, by the time the World Cup finals begin at the end of May next year he will still be only 25.

Most players do not reach their peak until they are at least 27 or 28, when they have gained perhaps 10 years' experience but before they start to lose that split-second of pace and acceleration.

Ronaldo was unlucky. Like every Brazilian boy all he ever wanted to do was play football from morning to night. So, after he was injured the first time he tried to come back too quickly. It's a common problem. No one is to blame.

The doctors can say whether a player is fit medically. But to be fully fit to play football at the top level is something different – and the coach relies on how the player feels.

What happens then is that the player, who has been out for maybe six or seven months, is so desperate to play again that he says he is ready when, perhaps, he is not. That, I believe, is what happened with Ronaldo.

Target man...Ronaldo will be better than ever after his injury woes, says Pele

I have talked to him about this and I know he will not make the same mistake again. In the year he has been out injured he has changed a lot.

He used to enjoy the publicity and the parties. But now he is married, he has a baby. I can tell you he has grown up all of a sudden, he has matured. That has been important for him as an individual but also you will see that it has been important for him as a footballer.

Ronaldo has also gained from the experience of his years in Holland, Spain and Italy. I expect him to prove the point next year too.

Ronaldo and Rivaldo will be playing together for Brazil at the World Cup which gives me a great deal of confidence about our prospects of winning it for a record fifth time – never mind what happened at the Confederations Cup and immediately afterwards with yet another change of coach.

Rivaldo, of course, is not so popular back in Brazil. Perhaps it's because he has spent so many years of his career in Spain, first with Deportivo La Coruna then with Barcelona. But he has also been unlucky because when he has come home to play for Brazil either he has played badly or the team have played badly – and he has suffered for that. But he is a great player and I have as much confidence in him for the Copa America as I do in he and Ronaldo in the World Cup.

It may seem odd I can be so confident about Brazil and their chances in the Copa America and World Cup when the team has struggled so much lately. We have had some terrible results – and we deserved them. We did not play well. We disappointed the fans.

The biggest mistake was that because of all the changes of national coach we did not keep faith with the team we sent to the Olympic Games in Sydney last year.

The squad was packed full of good young players. We reached the quarter-finals and were unlucky to lose in extra time to Cameroon. Back home, everyone was upset. The Brazilian fans expect us to be No 1 all the time. Reaching only the last eight, or even coming second, is worth nothing. So Wanderley Luxemburgo was replaced as coach and all the work that had gone into building the Olympic squad went to waste.

That was a pity.

We should have taken the best six or seven players from the Olympic squad and mixed them in with three or four of our established senior players. Then we would have been building an

'We have had some terrible results and deserved them. Now it is important for the World Cup that we do well in the Copa America'

Pele, MasterCard's football ambassador, finds signs of hope for Brazil even amid the wreckage of the Confederations Cup

excellent team which would have played far better in the World Cup qualifying matches and been a big danger to everyone else in the finals.

Instead, what happened? We changed the whole team. Also, we then started to rely too heavily on the Europe-based players, and when they were called up they arrived just the day before an important game and too tired to play at their best. So matters got even worse. The answer, of course – as it always is in football! – was to change the coach, so first we had Emerson Leao, and now Luiz Felipe Scolari is in charge.

But the most important factor about playing a World Cup is that the team is running into its best form at the time of the tournament. This is why it is important we do well in the Copa America so that the coach has a solid base from which to approach the remaining World Cup qualifying games.

I have seen so many countries down the years who looked wonderful in their qualifying matches or in their warm-up games on the eve of the finals. That means nothing. I remember making complimentary remarks about Colombia before the 1994 World Cup. But when they got to the United States they were a big disappointment – and not only for me!

I worry if a team shows its best form in the first couple of group matches at a World Cup. Then you must worry that the team has peaked too soon. It should work the other way.

Remember Brazil in 1958? We beat a weak Austria 3-0 in our first game then drew 0-0 with England. It was clear the team was not functioning properly so the coach made changes – which, coincidentally, brought in Garrincha and myself. After that, everyone knows the rest.

Pele was talking to Keir Radnedge

'Cup of Peace' goes ahead

Tournament gets green light despite terrorist bombs in Colombia

COLOMBIA will host the 2001 Copa America in defiance of the terrorist bombs that have rocked the country in recent weeks.

Concerns were raised about Colombia's ability to host a violence-free tournament after 12 people were killed and more than 200 injured following bomb blasts in Bogota, Cali and Medellin, all venues for the Copa.

On May 26, four people were killed and 23 injured in a bomb attack close to the El Campin stadium in Bogota, venue for the Final on July 29.

The executive committee of CONMEBOL voted to keep Colombia as hosts after it was given reassurances from Colombian president Andres Pastrana and his security ministers that measures would be put in place to ensure a peaceful tournament.

"Unanimously the confederation has backed our country," Pastrana said after the meeting in the Paraguayan capital, Asuncion, also attended by the mayors of the seven cities that will host matches during the tournament.

"We want to show, in the name of all Colombians, that we will not let them down. This will be the cup of peace. Let's exchange bombs for goals."

Pastrana added that 20,000 troops would be deployed to ensure the safety of visiting teams. "We are deploying all our efforts to guarantee the safety of the Copa."

Pastrana has spent the past three years attempting to lay the foundations for a deal to end Colombia's civil war. Some 40,000 people, mostly civilians, have been killed during the past decade in fighting between leftist rebels, outlawed right-wing paramilitaries and Colombia's armed forces.

Colombia was chosen to host the Copa America 10 years ago as part of the rotation system for the biennial competition.

John Holmesdale

Carnage...the aftermath of a car-bomb attack in Bogota

SCHEDULE

GROUP A

In Barranquilla

July 11	Ecuador-Chile
July 11	Colombia-Venezuela
July 14	Chile-Venezuela
July 14	Colombia-Ecuador
July 17	Ecuador-Venezuela
July 17	Colombia-Chile

GROUP B

In Cali

July 12	Peru-Paraguay
July 12	Brazil-Mexico
July 15	Brazil-Peru
July 15	Paraguay-Mexico
July 18	Peru-Mexico
July 18	Brazil-Paraguay

GROUP C

In Medellin

July 13	Bolivia-Uruguay
July 13	Argentina-Canada
July 16	Uruguay-Canada
July 16	Argentina-Bolivia
July 19	Bolivia-Canada
July 19	Argentina-Uruguay

QUARTER-FINALS

July 22	2nd Gp A-2nd Gp B	(Pereira)	QF1
July 22	1st Gp C-best 3rd place	(Armenia)	QF2
July 23	1st Gp A-2nd best 3rd pl	(Armenia)	QF3
July 23	1st Gp B-2nd Gp C	(Manizales)	QF4

SEMI-FINALS

July 25	Winners QF1-Winners QF2	(Pereira)
July 26	Winners QF3-Winners QF4	(Manizales)

3RD-PLACE PLAY-OFF

July 29 *In Bogota*

FINAL

July 29 *In Bogota*

Colombia 2001

GROUP A Chile

Starting from scratch

Brian Homewood on the challenge facing under-fire coach Pedro Garcia

TEN MONTHS ago on a cold, damp night in Santiago, Chile handed four-times world champions Brazil a footballing lesson in a World Cup qualifier. They won 3-0 with goals from Fabian Estay, Ivan Zamorano and Marcelo Salas – all of them an example of control and top-quality finishing.

At that point, it seemed the Zamorano-Salas double act was set to produce a repeat performance of four years ago, when they took their country to a place at France 98 and subsequently into the last 16.

TACTICS

Garcia favours 3-5-2, with Nelson Tapia in goal, Pablo Contreras and Ricardo Rojas as stoppers, and Italo Diaz or Jorge Vargas at sweeper. Claudio Maldonado and Fabian Estay provide the defensive shield in midfield, giving a platform for the more explosive skills of Rodrigo Tello and David Pizarro. Reinaldo Navia is an option in attack to partner Salas.

How things have changed. Hit by a string of injuries, including to Salas, and some internal squabbling, the Chileans have lost all six of the World Cup qualifiers since then; coach Nelson Acosta, the man behind the Chilean revival, has resigned; and Zamorano announced his retirement after the 1-0 defeat by Uruguay in Santiago in April.

The Copa America offers Chile a new chance to start from scratch, though their performances will also be important for new coach Pedro Garcia, who has already survived one vote of confidence. He will hope they can at least equal their performance in Paraguay in 1999, when they reached the semi-finals.

Garcia's job was on the line after Chilean federation president Mario Mosquera said that Jorge Garces, coach of Valparaiso club Wanderers, had been his first choice. However, the federation then said Mosquera's comments had been misinterpreted.

Garcia admitted recently: "I think we have hit rock bottom in footballing terms," and he was also upset that a number of players refused to play in the last World Cup qualifier, against Paraguay, which Chile lost 1-0 to an injury-time goal.

The new coach sees Salas as the inevitable leader, though whether the player, who has been eyeing a move to Real Madrid, will want to forego his holidays is a different matter.

A bright spot for Chile has been the emergence of Rodrigo Tello on the left of midfield, but Garcia's biggest need is for a midfield organiser. This has always been a weak point for the team but is being exposed more cruelly now that the tenure of Salas and Zamorano is coming to an end.

Side on...Vargas (left) challenges Magallanes of Uruguay

One to watch JORGE VARGAS

IN FRONT of a microphone Jorge Vargas is as direct as when facing a surging striker.

Chile's disastrous recent form came about, he says, "because we fielded a lot of youngsters, and a South American Under-20 Championship or an Olympic Games are very different from World Cup qualifiers. Furthermore, our most important players haven't been at their best."

Even the 'untouchable' Ivan Zamorano is not spared. Vargas replied sarcastically to Bam Bam's declaration that he would take part in the Copa America only if the venue was switched to Mexico, where he is currently playing his club football. "Well," said Vargas, "for me it would be very convenient if the tournament could take place in Italy." The 25-year-old, formerly with Universidad Catolica, now plays for Reggina.

A difficult season for the club has been a good one for Vargas, who has become first-choice sweeper having previously been a specialist marker. The positional change and Italian football generally have changed his game. "The aerial power of Serie A has forced me to become more explosive," says the defender. "I don't mind playing as a stopper, but in my new position I enjoy having more responsibility to organise the defence."

After being first choice for Chile at the last Copa America, Vargas was sparingly used by Nelson Acosta in World Cup qualification. Now under Pedro Garcia he has a chance to re-establish himself. "Playing sweeper in Italy gives me more chance to fill the role in the national team," he says, and his recent display against Paraguay should be enough to book his place in Colombia.

"It's our chance to wipe out the bad impression caused by our World Cup campaign," says Vargas. "It can't be right that we're only above Venezuela."

Tim Vickery

GROUP A Colombia

Back to the future with Pacho

Tim Vickery on the return of Francisco Maturana

THE Copa America fixtures were drawn up with the intention of allowing Colombia an easy start, against Venezuela. But when the sides met in a World Cup qualifier in April only two late goals saved a point for the Colombians, and they were not enough to save the job of coach Luis Augusto Garcia.

Panicked by the faltering World Cup campaign and the prospect of hosting their first Copa America, the Colombian FA forced Garcia's resignation and brought back Francisco 'Pacho' Maturana, the coach who put the country on the football map.

Comebacks are seldom easy. His first game was a 3-0 defeat in Buenos Aires, the city where eight years ago his team destroyed Argentina 5-0. Indeed, Maturana's triumphs are all a fair way in the past. His previous job was a disastrous spell with Peru, where the local press accused him of being primarily interested in horse-racing.

Maturana quickly scotched speculation that he would recall Carlos Valderrama. Instead he has turned to youth, particularly after marking his comeback with a 3-0 defeat to Argentina. Out have gone the old guard, and several of Garcia's favourites.

For the playmaker role Maturana is known to have a high regard for Geovany 'The Prince' Hernandez, but has said that the player "will have to mature". David Ferreira offers interesting options, while Mauricio Molina would be a bold choice.

There was a surprise recall for Victor Aristizabal, who could feature either up front or as the link man to the pacy Jairo Castillo. The barrel-chested Eulalio Arriaga loves to attack down the right, and has the advantage that Colombia's group games are on his home ground.

In the same situation is midfielder Juan Carlos Ramirez, who could be asked to perform the holding role. Alongside him could be the improving Fabian Vargas.

At the back, the rapid Ivan Cordoba and classy Mario Yepes form a fine centre-back pairing, apparently leaving no room for the experienced Jorge Bermudez.

Oscar Cordoba is still first-choice keeper and his form is fundamental if Colombia's Copa America is to have a happy ending.

Comeback...Maturana

TACTICS

Coach Garcia flirted with three centre-backs before settling on 4-4-2, occasionally switching to 4-5-1 for away games. It would be a surprise if Maturana strayed from 4-4-2 at the Copa America. He will hope that the pace of Ivan Cordoba can rescue the defence from its old vice of playing flat.

Leaning in...Ferreira (right) comes up against Venezuela's Vallenilla

One to watch DAVID FERREIRA

IN PREVIOUS incarnations, Maturana's Colombia produced attractive midfield interplay, but restricted their options by trying to pass everything through the middle.

Now the coach can widen his game. Tiny David Ferreira is a playmaker who specialises in opening up the field. "I'm happiest in a free role," he says. "I can move out to either flank because I strike the ball well with both feet."

Such ability means that he can always cut inside and unleash a shot, and Ferreira's close control, acceleration and low centre of gravity mean that opposing defenders can never be sure what he is going to do.

Not yet 22, the midfielder joined America of Cali from Real Cartagena after twice helping Colombia win the prestigious Toulon Under-21 tournament.

After an initial battle for a first-team place at America, one of Colombia's biggest clubs, Ferreira has now made the breakthrough. He organised the team's attacks during this year's Libertadores Cup campaign, when they came within minutes of making the semi-finals.

His form was good enough to earn him a World Cup call-up. Against Bolivia in March his introduction was crucial in turning a dismal first half into a comfortable 2-0 victory. "It was important for us to use more width," he remembers. "Once we did that, we were on the right path." It was Ferreira's neat pass that forced the penalty which provided Colombia with their second goal.

In both subsequent games he appeared as a substitute, in a bid to revive the attack, and he may not make the starting line-up at the Copa. But Ferreira has been earmarked by Maturana as one of the men to provide ideas on the field during the tournament. "I have faith I'll be called on," says the playmaker. "I'm in good form and I'm keen to show my football."

Tim Vickery

Colombia 2001

GROUP A Ecuador

Enjoying the rollercoaster ride

The Copa America offers a chance to take stock for the region's in-form side, says Tim Vickery

A WHILE BACK, Ecuador viewed the Copa America as an irritating interruption to the World Cup qualification campaign. The wins keep rolling in, but even so there has been a change of heart.

Coach Hernan Dario Gomez was shot in a highly-publicised incident in Guayaquil, resigned, and was then coaxed back from his native Colombia by the Ecuadorian players.

The joyride had hurtled off in unexpected directions, and the Copa America is a welcome chance to step off and take stock.

"Qualifying for the World Cup is clearly our priority," says Gomez. "But that doesn't mean we'll be taking the Copa America lightly. It's a chance to keep our players active, and we'll be looking to go as far as we can."

It is also an opportunity for Ecuador to work on weak areas and experiment in an environment that is competitive and yet does not have World Cup points at stake.

TACTICS

Gomez has stayed faithful to 4-4-2. The strikers stay close together, with advancing full-backs providing width and either two or three of the midfielders primarily concerned with marking. The defence can be caught flat. Watch out for a corner where five attackers form a queue around the penalty spot.

Gomez would love to unearth a tall, commanding centre-back to deal with the aerial threat, but the cupboard seems bare. He can, though, look to integrate Jorge Guagua, the outstanding member of a poor Under-20 team.

Fierce in the tackle and composed in possession, Guagua could play defensive midfield, his Under-20 position, or at centre-back, where he has featured for club side El Nacional. He made a sensational start to his senior international career, as a substitute, setting up Agustin Delgado's injury-time goal in the 2-1 victory away to Peru in a June World Cup qualifier.

Gomez would also like to introduce more balance to his team. Ulises De la Cruz and Cleber Chala give penetration down the right, but on the other flank full-back Raul Guerron's advances owe more to determination than finesse.

Ecuador have also lacked a left-footed midfielder in front of him – until now. Walter Ayovi was previously known as Walter Corozo, until it transpired that he had been using false documents and was 21 instead of 18. After the midfielder had served a suspension, Gomez brought him straight into the squad.

"I always wanted him in," says the coach. "He can tip the balance with his dribbling in tight spaces."

One area of the team that needs no tinkering is the strike pairing of Ivan Kaviedes and Delgado. They have struck up a splendid understanding, their combination play providing attacking options when the team is under pressure.

However, Delgado is suspended for the next World Cup qualifier, against Argentina, and at some point during the Copa, Gomez may well look at possible replacements for his top scorer.

Team spirit...Edison Mendez

One to watch EDISON MENDEZ

OF ALL THE bonuses in Ecuador's World Cup campaign, the most surprising has been that the team have been winning recently even without their star player.

When the talismanic Alex Aguinaga was ruled out through injury, his replacement was Edison Mendez. He is not a direct substitute; Aguinaga's creative genius is irreplaceable. But with his workrate and all-round skills, Mendez has played his part to ensure the wins keep coming.

"A real team player," is how coach Gomez sees his 22-year-old midfielder. "He wants to help everyone and do the work of those around him."

"I've learned the profession demands sacrifice if you're to achieve the success you want," says Mendez, who came up through the ranks at his only club, Deportivo Quito. After games he makes a point of going back to visit his family, "because they were the ones who encouraged me in my decision to become a footballer."

They can be proud of his progress. Against Brazil in March he performed an excellent marking job on Rivaldo, and set Ecuador's moves in motion with crisp, swift passes.

Mendez has shown off his attacking skills in subsequent games. His flighted cross gave Agustin Delgado the chance to head the winner against Paraguay in April, and when the team fell behind to Peru in June after just 90 seconds, it was Mendez who scored the vital quick equaliser.

In the closing stages of the game, however, the midfielder was harshly sent off. It means he will be suspended for the next two World Cup games and increases his need to create a good impression in the Copa.

Mendez hopes to show Ecuador's growing footballing public just how much his dynamic presence will be missed when the World Cup qualifying campaign resumes in August.

Tim Vickery

GROUP A Venezuela

The weakest link

Brian Homewood on the team who always struggle on the continental stage

VENEZUELA are a curious team. For years, they have been promising to cast off their tag as South America's also-rans, but they just cannot seem to make the break.

Their last meeting with Brazil, in October in the oil city of Maracaibo, was a fairly typical day in the life of South America's minnows. For 20 minutes, Venezuela played on equal terms, threatening to take the lead and at one point passing the ball around to chants of 'Ole' from their supporters.

Then they tried one pass too many, gave the ball away and allowed Brazil's Euller to race away and score. In the next 25 minutes, they conceded four more goals and eventually crashed to a 6-0 defeat.

Venezuela's previous meeting with Brazil, at the 1999 Copa America, was almost identical. They looked reasonably solid for the first quarter of the match before collapsing and losing 7-0.

As a result, Venezuela, where baseball is preferred to football, have continued to play their role as table-proppers in South America's World Cup qualifying group, taking just four points from 13 outings.

Unlike many minnows, Venezuela's ambitions often go beyond just sitting back in defence and trying to keep the score respectable. Their players have good technique – Giovanni Savarese, Juan Arango and Gabriel Urdaneta in particular – and several have now emigrated, with Argentina, Wales and the United States among the destinations. But as a team they are still far too lightweight, especially in defence.

They have had their moments in the World Cup qualifiers, leading Uruguay in Montevideo before losing 3-1, beating Bolivia 4-2 at home and doing enough to beat Chile in a game they ended up losing 2-0.

The nearest they came to glory was against Colombia in April, when they led 2-0 with eight minutes left, only to allow the visitors to grab a point with some slapstick defending.

Although Venezuela rarely do anything but lose, they sacked Argentina's Omar Pastoriza last year because "the results did not live up to expectations" and replaced him with Richard Paez.

Paez has brought back keeper and former captain Rafael Dudamel, who like Paraguay's Jose Luis Chilavert and Brazil's Rogerio Ceni doubles as a free-kick specialist.

What's more, Venezuela have managed to avoid Brazil and Argentina in the Copa draw and, instead, face Colombia, for whom they tend to save their best. This should prompt an improvement on their display at the last Copa, when they lost all three games.

TACTICS

Paez favours 4-4-2, with Juan Arango and Gabriel Urdaneta providing the midfield supply line for Daniel Noriega and Alexander Rondon. Keeper Rafael Dudamel takes free-kicks, *a la* Chilavert.

In the swing...Richard Paez junior (left) with Ricardinho of Brazil

One to watch RICHARD PAEZ

THE continent's traditional whipping boys have a dynasty aiming to raise their footballing profile.

"It's a real boost to our players to have a Venezuelan in charge of the national team," says Richard Paez. "I think we're moving in the right direction, and not just because the coach is my dad!"

It is not hard to spot that Paez, now 22, was born into a football family. "It's something that helped me acquire a tactical understanding of the game," he says.

Operating behind the strikers, his intelligent movement and first-time passing add rhythm to the team's attacks.

Paez broke into the national squad at the tail end of coach Pastoriza's reign, and has appeared in Venezuela's last six World Cup qualifiers. He faces a fight for a first-team place in the Copa, with both the neat Gabriel Urdaneta and the highly talented Juan Arango strong candidates to start.

It indicates that Venezuelan football is gaining strength in depth. "Our players have a lot of talent at the age of 15 or so," says Paez. "But our clubs have no real structure. It explains why we can be competitive at Under-17 or 20 level, but after that a gap starts to open up as our opponents are more battle-hardened and much better in terms of concentration."

Standards are rising, though, as more Venezuelans pick up experience abroad. Paez recently returned home from Argentina to be part of Deportivo Tachira's Libertadores Cup campaign, having played for Boca Juniors' youth side and then for Lanus.

For all the recent progress, Venezuela still need to learn how to win. The Copa could give them some practice. As Paez junior puts it: "We've been putting in a lot of hard work, and I think we'll see the results in the Copa America."

Tim Vickery

Colombia 2001

GROUP B Brazil

Farewell to the Jogo Bonito

Brazil's Beautiful Game faces its latest and most serious threat as Big Phil takes charge. Brian Homewood reports

THE FUTURE of the Brazilian national team – the one with the golden shirts which older readers may remember once boasted the world's most sublimely gifted players – has been put in the hands of a coach who publicly encourages his team to foul the opposition.

Luiz Felipe Scolari, alias Big Phil, has become the fourth Brazil coach in less than a year, replacing Emerson Leao. He was dismissed in the shabbiest manner possible by the Brazilian federation (CBF) following Brazil's Confederations Cup fiasco.

There is no arguing over Big Phil's credentials for the job. He has been Brazil's most successful club coach over the past decade, with two Libertadores Cups – first with Gremio and then Palmeiras – topping his impressive list of conquests.

What worries the purists is that Big Phil is also in a league of his own when it comes to dirty tricks and gamesmanship. This is a man who, over the years, has regularly and unashamedly told his players to foul the opposition.

He has ordered his club's ball boys to disrupt play by throwing spare balls on to the field (when his team were defending a lead late in the game) and some claimed he once encouraged them into fights with players from the visiting team.

During matches, Scolari stands on the touchline for the entire 90 minutes, ranting non-stop at referees and their assistants. On one occasion, in an incident filmed and broadcast live to millions of television viewers, he told a referee who had just sent him off: "I'll wait for you outside, mate."

The microphones were again Big Phil's undoing when he lambasted his players for failing to kick an opponent. The team talk was sneakily recorded by a television crew through an open window and broadcast to the nation. "Is it possible not one of you could have kicked him?" he yelled, referring to Corinthians striker Edilson.

Add all this together and you appear to have the death knell for the Jogo Bonito (beautiful game).

But putting Big Phil in charge of a team that is famous – or at least was – for delighting the world with its carefree style is not quite the contradiction it might appear.

For one thing, Big Phil appears to have mellowed since he led an almost thuggish Gremio team to the Libertadores Cup in 1995. Recently, he has been at pains to point out that his teams commit fewer fouls than most in Brazil and last year even produced statistics to prove it.

And the Jogo Bonito is largely dead and buried in any case. Most Brazilian coaches nowadays pack their midfield with hatchet men, order their players to foul the opposition and generally use dubious means to win matches – hence the ridiculous average of around 55 fouls per match in Brazilian domestic football.

The only difference is that Big Phil owns up to it. "I'm stupid because I tell the truth while the others lie," he once said.

Wanderley Luxemburgo, Brazil's coach for two years after the 1998 World Cup, was billed as the man who would bring the panache back to the national team, thanks to his record at club level.

Instead, Luxemburgo turned Brazil into a team that relied exclusively on physical prowess. His teams used systematic fouling in midfield to stop the opposition, then employed the power and pace of Ronaldo in attack to catch them on the break. When Ronaldo was sidelined in late 1999, Luxemburgo's scheme went to pieces and he stopped winning games.

Big Phil, despite his reputation, will attack when it suits him and does not immediately shut up shop when his team scores a goal (though he may get the ball boys to disrupt the game to slow down the opposition).

Playing attractive football, however, is the least of Scolari's worries at the moment. The team is in dire straits, thanks as much to the inept management of the CBF as the failings of his predecessor. Winning is very much what matters for the time being and that is where Scolari comes into his own.

Brazil are fourth in the South American World Cup qualification section – from which only four teams qualify directly for the finals – and face a crucial game against Uruguay in Montevideo on July 1. Uruguay are sixth in the group but will go level on points with Brazil if they win.

Scolari has responded to the situation by going for experience, bringing back big names such as Rivaldo, Roberto Carlos, Cafu, Antonio Carlos, Romario and Juninho Paulista for the match.

A number of them had been dropped by Leao, who alleged they needed a break – though Brazil's critics were fed up with their failure to produce even half their club form at national team level. Zico compared them to "civil servants who only turn up for work to clock in".

You'll do it my way...Luiz Felipe Scolari

It was clear at Big Phil's first press conference that a new era was beginning. Instead of Luxemburgo's talk of "macro-planning" and other corporate claptrap, we were treated to comments such as "angels only exist in heaven". Asked what he expected from his players, Scolari said: "Discipline. Respect for their team-mates. Respect and love for their country."

And they can forget about holidays if they want to play at next year's World Cup. Scolari made it clear that he wants as many top players as possible at the Copa America, played at a

COPA SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS: Dida *(Milan)*, Marcos *(Palmeiras)*
DEFENDERS: Cafu *(Roma)*, Antonio Carlos *(Roma)*, Belletti *(Sao Paulo)*, Roberto Carlos *(Real Madrid)*, Serginho *(Milan)*, Roque Junior *(Milan)*, Lucio *(Bayer Leverkusen)*, Cris *(Cruzeiro)*
MIDFIELDERS: Emerson *(Roma)*, Rivaldo *(Barcelona)*, Fabio Rochemback *(Internacional)*, Mauro Silva *(La Coruna)*, Alex *(Palmeiras)*, Juninho Paulista *(Vasco da Gama)*
FORWARDS: Romario *(Vasco da Gama)*, Euller *(Vasco da Gama)*, Ewerthon *(Corinthians)*, Geovanni *(Cruzeiro)*, Jardel *(Galatasaray)*, Elber *(Bayern Munich)*

time when the Europe-based players would be expected to have a month off.

He made no bones about the fact that good football in itself is not going to be enough to win in Montevideo's Centenario stadium.

"To play in some places in South America, you have to have a little intelligence, meanness and naughtiness to avoid being stung. They are much more intelligent in this sense than us," he said. "But we will qualify for the World Cup. It may not be pretty but we will qualify."

Designer suits on the touchline, worn by Luxemburgo and Leao, are also out. Scolari is very much a tracksuit man.

Big Phil believes his team need around 10 more points from their last six games – which also include trips to Argentina and Bolivia – to qualify, so a win in Montevideo is imperative. "I'm sure we can help give the people a team of which they can be proud. It is maybe short of credibility at the moment," he said.

The Copa America – in which Brazil face Mexico, Paraguay and Peru in their first round group – comes immediately after the Uruguay game and will provide Scolari with a chance to build his team for the remaining five qualifiers, to be played between August and November.

And a solid team foundation is what Brazil need. Luxemburgo and Leao were never able to settle on anything like a regular line-up. Leao selected no fewer than 62 players for his 10 games in charge, of which he won only three.

Scolari, pointing to Argentina as an example, said he would choose a base of 30 and stick with it.

Not that Leao was exclusively to blame. CBF president Ricardo Teixeira banned him from taking players from Brazil's leading clubs to Japan/South Korea for the Confederations Cup, which clashed with the finals of the state championships and the Libertadores Cup.

Poor Leao was deluded into thinking that at least it meant he would not be under pressure because the results would not matter. Five matches later, including goalless draws with Canada and Japan and defeats by France and Australia, he was sacked – and the CBF did not even wait for him to get back to Brazil to do it.

Instead, they rang national team co-ordinator Antonio Lopes in Tokyo and got him to do the dirty work. Leao was dismissed at Tokyo airport as the team waited to board the plane home, giving him 24 hours stuck in a metal tube at 35,000 feet to contemplate his fate.

It was shabby treatment, even by the CBF's low standards. Teixeira would not meet his former coach when he got back or even return his phone calls. "Teixeira behaved like a naughty schoolboy," wrote Jose Trajano in the daily sports paper *Lance*.

Leao was clearly not amused. "I know many things," he said menacingly as he got off the plane at Sao Paulo airport, leaving the possibility that he would spill some dirt at an inconvenient moment in the future.

New challenge...Geovanni

One to watch GEOVANNI

"GEOVANNI is fundamental to my scheme," said his club coach. "He's fast and can finish with great precision. He deserves a call-up to the national team."

Just as well that Geovanni's club was Cruzeiro, and his coach Luiz Felipe Scolari, the recently-appointed Brazil coach, who named Geovanni in his first squad.

At club level, Scolari brought the best out of the young striker. A previous Cruzeiro coach, Levir Culpi, had sent him out on loan, complaining he was "arrogant and petulant". On his return, Geovanni played alongside rumbustious centre-forward Oseas in one of the little-and-large pairings that have been a feature of Scolari's work. The duo clicked, with the youngster drawing extravagant praise from his experienced partner.

"Geovanni has a brilliant future," said Oseas. "He has excellent control, and can both set up goals and score them with his fierce shooting."

Geovanni's full repertoire was on display in this year's Libertadores Cup. His seven goals included long-range rockets, delicate chips and even a far-post header. His passes and crosses off either foot made goals for others.

A harsh red card meant he was suspended for the quarter-final, second leg against Palmeiras, when Cruzeiro were knocked out on penalties. But all was not lost. Barcelona were watching his progress, and next season he has a new challenge at Camp Nou. It will be a long way from home for the deeply religious 21-year-old from the Minas Gerais countryside.

When Geovanni stepped up to the Olympic side he disappointed. Perhaps suffering from nerves, he tended to snatch at his shots, sending them high into the stands.

But big-time pressure will now be a constant in Geovanni's life. The Copa America is an ideal opportunity to show he can cope.

Tim Vickery

Colombia 2001

GROUP B Mexico

At an all-time low

Carlos Ramirez laments the recent form of the Mexicans

CRUZ AZUL may have been flying the flag for Mexico by reaching the Final of the Libertadores Cup, but the country's image has been badly tarnished in recent months by a series of poor performances from the various national teams.

Under coach Enrique Meza, the senior side won just five of their 19 matches and lost 11. Only two of those victories (1-0 against Chile, 4-0 against Jamaica) came in the most recent 16 games.

Meza, who resigned after the recent World Cup qualifying defeat by Honduras, was also in charge of Mexico's junior teams, and they have faired just as badly. The Under-23s failed to reach last year's Olympic finals, and the Under-20s and Under-17s have also missed out on their respective world tournaments.

After the senior side suffered three straight defeats at the Confederations Cup, the nadir was reached when they were beaten in successive World Cup qualifiers. First, Costa Rica won 2-1 at the Azteca in Mexico City, thus ending an unbeaten run of 52 World Cup qualifying matches at the stadium. Worse was to come a few days later when Honduras won 3-1 at home thanks to a Carlos Pavon hat-trick.

Mexico now face an uphill struggle to qualify for the 2002 World Cup – with five games to go, they are four points off the third and last qualifying spot. The fears expressed on these pages over the past few months have now become a reality.

Against Costa Rica, there was no connection between defence and attack, and no team spirit. Moreover, opponents simply do not have the respect they used to feel towards the Mexican national team.

To top it all, Meza's use of inadequate players such as Juan Pablo Rodriguez, while refusing to utilise the experience of the likes Jorge Campos, Alberto Garcia Aspe and Salvador Carmona, has been infuriating public and media alike. Meza did make a concession by recalling Garcia Aspe for the game against Costa Rica.

A competent performance in the Copa America may restore some badly needed respect and confidence in the short term. But, in the long term, the problems go right to the heart of the Mexican game.

TACTICS

Coach Meza favoured a 5-3-2 formation in the Confederations Cup, using Rafael Marquez as sweeper and Daniel Osorno in the central attacking midfield role, behind Antonio De Nigris.

Supply line...Miguel Zepeda

One to watch MIGUEL ZEPEDA

IT IS not only in his native land that Argentina coach Marcelo Bielsa has left his mark.

A short spell with the Atlas club was long enough for him to groom players and pass on his tactical concepts in Mexico.

A confirmed believer in wide attackers, Bielsa helped develop the strong-running, left-sided Daniel Osorno. And on the other flank he had Miguel Zepeda – a walking, shooting and crossing illustration of Bielsa's ideas on the value of skilful players exploiting wide spaces.

Under the command of Bielsa's compatriot Ricardo Lavolpe, Atlas made it to the quarter-finals of last year's Libertadores Cup, and played the boldest, most attractive football of any side.

By this time both Zepeda and Osorno were part of the Mexico squad. It is Zepeda, three years senior at 25, who has made the biggest impression.

His first steps in international football came in happier days for Mexico. At the 1999 Copa America it was Zepeda's late headed goal that gave his team third place, confirming the good impression they had made in the previous year's World Cup.

Then Zepeda was the star of the show as, on home ground, Mexico won the Confederations Cup. He scored twice as Brazil were beaten 4-3 in the Final.

With key players ageing together and an unwise defensive system, Mexico have since slipped backwards. Zepeda's absence through injury from this summer's Confederations Cup hardly helped his team's chances.

With his early crosses, the wide man is an important supply line for Mexico's central striker. With his ability to cut inside and shoot with either foot, he is a key goalscorer in his own right.

If the good times are to return, Mexico will expect a contribution from Miguel Zepeda.

Tim Vickery

GROUP B Paraguay

Everything to play for

Tim Vickery on the places up for grabs in Paraguay's World Cup squad

PARAGUAY coach Sergio Markarian says a first-round elimination from the Copa America "wouldn't necessarily be a failure. I'm not so concerned about the results as long as certain players consolidate their positions or we develop in a number of aspects."

It is a shrewd approach from the Uruguayan. His team have been superb in World Cup qualification, beating Brazil, winning in Colombia and outplaying Argentina.

It is not surprising, however, that as a small country Paraguay lacks strength in depth. The absences of defender Carlos Gamarra and striker Jose Cardozo were sorely felt against Chile recently.

The Copa, then, is a great chance for Markarian to fill gaps in the squad and work on weak areas. Finding left-sided players, for example, has been a problem during the World Cup campaign. Alfredo Amarilla and Gustavo Morinigo could be given the task of providing some balance to Paraguay's play.

Centre-back Celso Ayala, a regular in the World Cup qualifiers, faces a lengthy suspension. The versatile Denis Caniza is a possible replacement, but Markarian will want to have a look at Cerro Porteno's in-form Juan Daniel Caceres.

Keeper Jose Luis Chilavert will not be in Colombia. Age is beginning to take its toll on his agility, adding spice to the fight between his able deputies Ricardo Tavarelli and Aldo Bobadilla.

Markarian has recalled two midfielders out due to inactivity at club level. Julio Enciso was a key player until Internacional of Brazil decided he was surplus to requirements, while Diego Gavilan of Newcastle has not appeared since his epic duel with Roberto Carlos in the win over Brazil.

In attack, World Cup squad places are up for grabs for quicksilver Nelson Cuevas and Miguel Caceres.

TACTICS

For an unhappy 20 minutes against Venezuela, Paraguay reverted to the 3-5-2 system that served them so well at France 98. Other than that it has been a solid 4-4-2, with a team who concentrate on doing the simple things well and taking advantage of their aerial strength.

COPA SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS: Ricardo Tavarelli *(Olimpia)*, Aldo Bobadilla *(Cerro Porteno)*
DEFENDERS: Carlos Espinola *(Cerro Porteno)*, Nestor Isasi *(Guarani)*, Nelson Zelaya *(Cerro Porteno)*, Juan Daniel Caceres *(Cerro Porteno)*, Denis Caniza *(Lanus)*, Daniel Sanabria *(Libertad)*
MIDFIELDERS: Francisco Esteche *(Olimpia)*, Victor Quintana *(Olimpia)*, Julio Enciso *(Internacional-Bra)*, Diego Gavilan *(Newcastle)*, Gustavo Morinigo *(Libertad)*, Alfredo Amarilla *(Sportivo Luqueno)*
FORWARDS: Aristidis Masi *(Sportivo Luqueno)*, Nelson Cuevas *(River Plate-Arg)*, Virgilio Ferreira *(Cerro Porteno)*, Edgar Robles *(Libertad)*, Miguel Caceres *(Levante)*

Learning curve...Nelson Cuevas

One to watch NELSON CUEVAS

PARAGUAY'S most potent weapon at France 98 was Miguel Benitez, who troubled defences with his pace and trickery.

The Espanyol striker is now 31 and only just beginning a comeback after a horrific long-term injury. It means that Paraguay need another gnat-like attacker in the Benitez mould, and Nelson Cuevas looks like the man.

His breakthrough came at the 1999 South American Under-20 Championship. Bizarrely fielded at both right-back and on the left wing, he essentially played the same way in both positions – running with the ball with pace and swerves which made him hard to dispossess.

At the time he was with the tiny Atletico Tembetary club. Not for long. Argentina's River Plate liked what they saw and took him to Buenos Aires.

Initially there were few first-team opportunities. Even so, he was learning. River fixed him as a striker and worked on the raw edges of his game, teaching him to combine with his team-mates rather than constantly charge towards goal.

Now 21, this has been the year when the studying has paid off. If places in the starting line-up are still rare, he has often come off the bench to make a contribution.

As soon as Cuevas was a regular on the River team-sheet he was drafted into the national squad, and has looked lively in Paraguay's last three games.

The forward made his international debut in the previous Copa America. Following an injury to Jose Cardozo, he was called up at the last moment and found himself straight in the team.

It was the first time the tournament had been held in Paraguay, and the pressure of the occasion proved too great. Cuevas was dropped after an undistinguished opening performance on the left side of midfield against Bolivia.

Two years older, wiser and stronger, he should do better this time.

Tim Vickery

GROUP B Peru

In search of firepower

Brian Homewood on Peru's new sense of purpose under Julio Cesar Uribe

IF ONLY Claudio Pizarro could produce 50 per cent of his club form when playing for his country, Peru would still be fighting for a place at next year's World Cup and not looking at the Copa America as a mere consolation.

Pizarro, who finished the German championship as third highest scorer with Werder Bremen, has managed only two goals in 13 World Cup qualifying outings for his country, and not because of any lack of goalscoring opportunities.

Peru are still rueing the home games against Colombia and Ecuador, when they created a hatful of chances but were let down by their old failing in front of goal, with the usually deadly Pizarro one of the main culprits.

The Peruvian shortcomings in attack were so desperate that they recalled Flavio Maestri, a rather lumbering striker, for the match against Chile, Peru's 11th of the campaign. And just eight minutes after coming on at half-time, he scored – achieving what Pizarro had failed to do in the previous 10 outings up to that point.

TACTICS

A classic 4-4-2, which occasionally switches to a more conservative 3-5-2, as for the recent World Cup qualifier in Brazil. Palacios and Ciurlizza are the main creative figures in midfield, with Pizarro, Andres Mendoza and Maestri the options in attack.

Peru's absence at next year's World Cup will be a shame as they still play the attractive one-touch football that delighted neutrals at the 1970 and 1978 World Cups and famously caught Scotland coach Ally McLeod with his trousers down. Their weakness is that their players often want one touch too many and seem afraid to shoot at goal.

Their recent fortunes may have taken a different turn had Juan Carlos Oblitas, who played in the 1978 World Cup, not resigned after the Copa America two years ago in protest at what he thought was unfair criticism.

Oblitas appeared to be on the way to building a winning team, but the switch to Colombia's Francisco Maturana proved a disaster. Peru won only two of their first eight World Cup qualifiers, a home defeat by Argentina finally costing Maturana his job.

New coach Julio Cesar Uribe has kept the basis of the side, with Nolberto Solano on the right of a midfield that is controlled by the talented but sometimes over-elaborate Roberto Palacios, and the spirit is clearly more positive.

Uribe, nicknamed the Black Diamond and one of the most gifted players Peru has produced, is a firm believer in the finer arts of the game. The future is still bright, especially if the young Pizarro, who is only 22, can one day produce the goods for his country.

But Uribe desperately needs to give his team a cutting edge. Otherwise, Peru's performances will continue to receive a headline that is so commonly used by the local media that it is almost a cliche: 'We played like never before and lost as always'.

Tough guy...Ciurlizza takes on Mexico's Torrado

One to watch MARCO CIURLIZZA

ALL THE attention in Peru's World Cup qualifiers has centred on the strikers. After missing out on France 98 on goal difference, Claudio Pizarro and company vowed to make sure Peru would be more potent this time.

But Peru have fired blanks once more. The longer Pizarro went without scoring, the more anxious he became. Nerves were not the only problem, however. He would have benefited from more direct service, rather than the slow, elaborate build-up the Peruvians have favoured.

It is a lesson coach Uribe seems to have learned – and Marco Ciurlizza is the man to supply more dynamism to the Peru midfield.

"He's a tough player who can both win the ball and bring it forward," said his coach at Alianza Lima, the Brazilian Paulo Autori, singling Ciurlizza out for special praise before Peru's 1-1 draw in Brazil last April.

It was Ciurlizza's first start in the campaign. He fully justified the judgment of his club coach, using skill and stamina to break up Brazil's attacks and give his strikers an early pass. It was a performance that could help him get a chance in Brazilian football.

Autori has said Ciurlizza is ready for a move abroad, and there is speculation that he could bring the 23-year-old with him if he returns to his homeland.

Before teaming up with Autori at Alianza, Ciurlizza had several seasons with one of their rivals, Universitario. He can certainly claim to be an advanced student of the Copa America, having seen plenty of the tournament from close range. In 1997 he was taken to Bolivia for experience, but not called upon to play. In Paraguay two years later he was used as a second-half substitute but found it difficult to settle into the games.

Third time round, Ciurlizza aims to prove he is ready.

Tim Vickery

GROUP C Argentina

Leaving room for doubt

Eric Weil on the absentees from Argentina's Copa squad

ARGENTINA need just five points from their five remaining World Cup qualifiers to confirm their place in next year's finals. And by rights they should be considered firm favourites to win the Copa America.

But Argentina, like many other countries, are not sending their full-strength squad.

Hernan Crespo, Gabriel Batistuta, Juan Veron, Diego Simeone, Kily Gonzalez, Walter Samuel and Roberto Ayala – all World Cup regulars – have been rested by coach Marcelo Bielsa.

Bielsa had picked 20 of his squad of 22 by press time, having waited until the end of the Italian and Spanish seasons, but has still opted to include some experienced players – Javier Zanetti, Ariel Ortega and Claudio Lopez were all called up.

However, the coach will use the Copa America to give a chance to players who are normally overlooked. Defenders Eduardo Berizzo and Roberto Sensini have not played for some months, while the inclusion of Napoli's Facundo Quiroga was a big surprise.

There is only one regular, Zanetti, in midfield, which also includes Matias Almeyda and Claudio Husain. The attack features Claudio Lopez and Ortega, as well as Juan Esnaider and Julio Cruz, who have made occasional and not too successful international appearances. Other attack-minded players include Santiago Solari and 21-year-old newcomer Luciano Galletti, who has shown up well in the national league. But, overall, the forward line looks weak.

There is little room for home-grown players, although Juan Roman Riquelme of Boca Juniors was expected to join up after the Libertadores Cup Final on June 27.

Argentina have taken similarly weakened squads to the last two Copa Americas, and failed to progress beyond the quarter-finals. A similar outcome is on the cards.

TACTICS

Bielsa's side play a 3-3-1-3 formation, which has not allowed Gabriel Batistuta and Hernan Crespo to play together. The absence of both from the Copa will give room for experimentation.

COPA SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS Roberto Bonano *(River Plate)*, Pablo Cavallero *(Celta Vigo)*
DEFENDERS Facundo Quiroga *(Napoli)*, Roberto Sensini *(Parma)*, Eduardo Berizzo *(Celta Vigo)*, Mauricio Pochettino *(Paris SG)*, Diego Placente *(Bayer Leverkusen)*, Nelson Vivas *(Internazionale)*
MIDFIELDERS Javier Zanetti *(Internazionale)*, Matias Almeyda *(Parma)*, Claudio Husain *(Napoli)*, Pablo Aimar *(Valencia)*, Santiago Solari *(Real Madrid)*, Esteban Cambiasso *(Independiente)*, Marcelo Gallardo *(Monaco)*
FORWARDS Julio Cruz *(Bologna)*, Claudio Lopez *(Valencia)*, Luciano Galletti *(Estudiantes)*, Ariel Ortega *(River Plate)*, Juan Esnaider *(Zaragoza)*

Skipper in the making...Cambiasso

One to watch ESTEBAN CAMBIASSO

MARCELO BIELSA'S plans are going so smoothly that there would seem to be few places up for grabs in Argentina's 22 for next year's World Cup.

So it could be significant that Esteban Cambiasso was eased into the squad for the recent game with Colombia, and then one of the first named for the Copa America.

A World Youth Cup winner in 1997, the midfielder has been representing Argentina since the age of 15 – Real Madrid were so impressed with him at the Toulon youth tournament that they took him to Spain.

After two seasons they loaned him back to Argentina to give him first-team experience. For three years he was an idol with Independiente. Now he appears to be on his way back to Europe, and the Independiente fans gave him a rousing send-off.

"If I receive this kind of recognition it's because I've approached every game with the intensity it deserves," he said.

Born into a basketball-loving family, it took time for Cambiasso to find a passion for football. In other respects, though, he is a typical product of the best aspects of Argentinian football culture.

In addition to his wholehearted approach, Cambiasso acquired tactical awareness from intense work done at his original club, Argentinos Juniors.

From the earliest stages his versatility was a trademark. At Independiente he showed he could take either a defensive holding role or a more advanced slot on the left of midfield.

For Bielsa the attraction is obvious. He has a player who, although not yet 21, has the nous to shadow the positions held in the full-strength side by Diego Simeone and Juan Pablo Sorin.

For Cambiasso the Copa America is a short-term path to a place in the World Cup squad. And a long-term step towards fulfilling what many see as his destiny – captaining Argentina.

Tim Vickery

Colombia 2001

GROUP C Bolivia

Young and hungry

Tim Vickery on the new generation of Bolivian players coming through

A 4-2 DEFEAT by Venezuela last June was enough to convince Carlos Aragones that his team were not going to the World Cup finals. So Bolivia's coach shrewdly chose to use the rest of the campaign to carry out long-term rebuilding.

In came a new generation. Out went most of the old guard. Most, but not all. Sweeper Juan Manuel Pena remains, as does stopper Marco Sandy. And the attack is directed by the veteran Julio Cesar Baldivieso, who is encouraged by the progress his new team-mates are making.

"It's time we learnt to believe in ourselves," he said. "We may not have the force of marketing that some other countries have, but we're in a process of renewal, and we're assembling a group of young players who have a lot to give Bolivian football."

The Copa America is important to the self-esteem of Aragones' young side. It is their chance to confirm the good impression they have started to make. The coach will be keen to study the effectiveness of his team's attack.

Baldivieso, a dead-ball specialist, pulls the strings in midfield, looking to use the wing-backs early in the move. The diminutive, rapid Luis Gatty Ribeiro on the right and the strong, solid Percy Colque on the left are important supply lines.

Up front, Aragones seems to have settled on the pairing of Joaquim Botero and Lider Paz. It seems to be working. After just five goals in their first 11 games, Bolivia scored eight in their last two. Both matches were at home, however. It is 20 years since Bolivia lost a World Cup qualifier in La Paz, an indication of the advantage its extreme altitude offers. While Aragones hopes his attack can be as effective at sea level, he would also like to find a keeper who can hit the heights required.

The veteran Jose Fernandez would appear to have been discarded after one poor game too many, but young Carlos Arias does not inspire much confidence. It would be an extremely bold choice, but Aragones could give a chance to Under-20 keeper Hugo Suarez.

Another from the Under-20 team who could be called up is left-sided midfielder Julio Cesar Cortez. There is also the chance to recall Portugal-bound midfielder Ronald Garcia, who has completed a suspension in World Cup qualification.

TACTICS

After flirting with 4-4-2, Aragones has settled on a 3-5-2 formation, with both wing-backs playing important attacking roles. The most defensive variation is to field just one striker. The most attacking – to field two constructive midfielders and one defensive, not vice-versa.

Pocket battleship...Ribeiro shows his dynamic style against Uruguay

One to watch LUIS GATTY RIBEIRO

"WE'VE BEEN working hard on speed," says Luis Gatty Ribeiro, whose bullet-fast breaks down the right are fundamental to Bolivia's plans to turn defence into attack.

After emerging at the 1999 South American Under-20 Championship, the diminutive wing-back had forced his way into the senior side within 12 months.

National coach Carlos Aragones followed his progress with the Bolivar club as they made it through to the quarter-finals of last year's Libertadores Cup. Many from that run are now playing key roles in the national team, which perhaps helps explain why Ribeiro feels that "this is a very united group".

There is striker Joaquim Botero, a frequent beneficiary of Ribeiro's crosses, who the wing-back sees as "one of the few players who knows how to get away from his marker and find space". There are midfielders Julio Cesar Baldivieso – "who knows so much and whose experience is so important" – and former Under-20 colleague Ronald Garcia.

Baldivieso has since moved to Chile, and Garcia is set to follow the example of his idol Erwin Sanchez and head for Portugal. But in general there are few opportunities for Bolivians to play abroad. Playmaker Joselito Vaca recently went to the USA, where the likes of Jaime Moreno and Marco Etcheverry became stars but lost their edge. Ribeiro deserves better. His defending could be improved, but with his explosive pace and aggressive attitude the 21-year-old can wreak havoc.

A superb performance in the recent 3-3 draw with Argentina should have opened some doors. A few international goals would also help him get noticed, and judging by recent performances, they should come sooner rather than later.

Perhaps the 'Cup of Peace' will be the perfect stage for the man from La Paz.

Tim Vickery

GROUP C Canada

Nothing to lose

The North American guests travel to Colombia in good heart, says John Holmesdale

CANADA travel to Colombia as guests of the South American confederation and with little to lose.

Holger Osieck's side are already out of the running for the 2002 World Cup finals, having come a poor third in their semi-final group.

However, team spirit is not low; at the recent Confederations Cup, Canada were beaten by Cameroon and Japan, but held Brazil to a 0-0 draw. Although the latter result was against a third-string side, it was arguably one of Canada's best-ever performances.

That a goalless draw should be considered so significant a milestone in Canada's soccer history says a great deal about Osieck's approach. Under the German, Canada are a well-drilled outfit, organised and committed, but lacking any flair.

The team's surprise victory in last year's Gold Cup was achieved playing the sort of negative football that turned the crowds away in their thousands – only 6,200 turned up to watch the Canadians overcome Colombia in the Final in Los Angeles. They had qualified for the quarter-finals on the toss of a coin after drawing 0-0 with South Korea.

That said, Osieck does deserve a modicum of credit for organising a squad from players who are spread around the world, from Scotland's Inverness Caledonian Thistle, via Oldham of the English Second Division, through the Swiss and German leagues, Major League Soccer, and not forgetting Tony Menezes of Botafogo.

The coach is looking forward to the challenge facing his side in Colombia, saying: "The Copa America is the second prestigious tournament we have been invited to take part in as a result of our success at last year's Gold Cup.

"It's come at an opportune time for us after our elimination from the World Cup qualifiers, and we see it as an opportunity to continue our development programme."

TACTICS

Osieck's side play 5-3-2, with the emphasis on containing the opposition. Tony Menezes is the outstanding defender, while for goals the Canadians will look to Oldham's Carlo Corrazin.

Pass and move...defender Menezes is also a useful attacking force

One to watch TONY MENEZES

A BRAZILIAN couple went on honeymoon to Hollywood, liked North America so much they stayed for 14 years, and now their son is the linchpin of the Canadian defence.

The family returned to Brazil when Tony Menezes was a teenager and the young centre-back's sights were fixed on the Brazil team. But an uncle who stayed on in North America brought his progress to the attention of the Canadian Soccer Association.

They sent scouts to Brazil to have a look at Menezes, liked what they saw, and soon he had replaced the legendary Randy Samuel in the national team's defence.

Coach Osieck uses Menezes as a sweeper, and though he lacks pace, his left-footed passing and forward runs are a welcome addition to a weak attack.

"Our defensive record shows we centre-backs must have something," says Menezes.

The defender's international commitments have caused him problems with his club, Botafogo, who offered him few opportunities and have now let him go. All of which gave a sweet taste to Menezes' fine performance in the 0-0 draw with Brazil at the Confederations Cup.

Before joining the Rio de Janeiro side, he had a short spell with Salamanca. But the opportunity came too early. "I was too immature," Menezes recalls. "It was my first time away from my family."

Now 26, he feels ready for challenges wherever they may come, and hopes that his experience might be of benefit to Canadian football. "I think we can use winning the Gold Cup as a springboard. After our triumph I had a good chat with the Prime Minister. I said it would be an ideal moment to invest in a strong, local competition, which is an absolute necessity if we want to produce new players and keep them in competitive action."

Tim Vickery

Colombia 2001

GROUP C Uruguay

Brazil on their minds

The World Cup qualifiers are more important to Uruguay, says Tim Vickery

THE BUILD-UP to the World Cup qualifier at home to Brazil on July 1 overshadowed the Copa America in the minds of Uruguayans.

In the desperation to avoid missing out on a third successive World Cup, little attention has been paid to a possible rift in the upper echelons of Uruguayan football.

Coach Victor Pua announced his intention to take an experimental side to the Copa America, just as he did two years ago when Uruguay surprised everyone by going all the way to the Final. FA boss Eugenio Figueredo, however, is adamant that his team will be at full strength.

If Figueredo gets his way, Uruguay will present a solid team strong in all central positions. The aggressive Dario Silva has been a revelation up front, and Pablo Garcia superb in midfield. The defence has the best record in the continent. Magnificent young keeper Fabian Carini has been well protected by the duo of Alejandro Lembo and Paolo Montero, or Gustavo Sorondo in the latter's frequent absences.

If Pua chooses to experiment then there could be a switch to three centre-backs. So well has Sorondo done that there is a case for his inclusion as well as, and not instead of, Montero. Pua has recently tried 3-5-2 in training.

Such a change would not be worthwhile unless the wing-backs give extra penetration. It is a role that speedy Gustavo Varela could perform on the right, with Dario Rodriguez on the left.

Other players Pua may choose to have a look at include classy centre-back Joe Bizera, combative midfielders Diego Perez and Guillermo Giacomazzi, and explosive striker Javier Chevanton.

Pua stepped up from assistant following Daniel Passarella's strange resignation. Pua says that since taking over as coach "the changes have been more strategic than philosophical". His midfield may be slightly more defensive than Passarella's, but the project is still the same, with Uruguay standing by the youngsters Pua developed in his time as youth team coach.

Ironic, then, that he faces a campaign for the recall of 35-year-old playmaker Pablo Bengoechea – who just a few months ago was being told to retire by his own club's supporters.

TACTICS

So far Uruguay have restricted themselves to 4-4-2, with the midfield operating in diamond formation. Pua seems to favour a midfield with a more defensive balance than Passarella, and there could be an experiment with three centre-backs in the Copa America.

Something to prove...Coelho

One to watch FABIAN COELHO

WHEN Uruguay returned home as runners-up in the 1997 World Youth Cup, one in six of the population took to the streets to greet them.

A new generation had arrived to put some shine back on the crown of the first kings of the global game.

Midfielder Fabian Coelho was one member of that squad who has been working hard to keep the promise. He was sent to the 1997 Confederations Cup for experience. But his true international breakthrough came two years ago in the Copa America.

His powerful running with the ball was one of the most attractive aspects of an experimental team which exceeded all expectations.

In World Cup qualification he has started three and appeared as a substitute in two of Uruguay's 12 games.

At 24, though, the time has come for Coelho to show he is more than a fringe player. In some big away games, Hugo De Leon, his coach at Nacional, still leaves him on the bench, believing that Coelho contributes little to the team's marking – a suspicion that does serious harm to his prospects.

Uruguay coach Victor Pua knows his strengths. With more attention to his weaknesses, the result could be an all-round international.

Tim Vickery

NEXT MONTH

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS... who's doing what, where, when and why

WORLD YOUTH CUP... the full story from ARGENTINA

Team by team... the new seasons in FRANCE and GERMANY

STAY AHEAD OF THE GAME

WORLD SOCCER

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WORLDSERVICE

INTERNATIONALS

Sunday, May 20

May 20 - Calcutta - WC qual
India 5 (Dias 12, Vijayan 24, Bhutia pen 36, Ancheri 59, Hakim 80)
Brunei 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 7,000. **Ref:** Lutfullin (Uzb)
India: Balaji - Dhanesh, Gawli, Renedy Singh (Venkatesh 50), Dias (Hakim 63), Vijayan (Correia 78), Ancheri, I Singh, Bhutia, Jamil, Fernandez.
Brunei: Yussof - Damit, Ismail (Duraman 83), Muhidin, Panjang, Abdullah, Taha, Momin, Samak (Dawat 46), Kahar (Kambang 64), Johari.

Friday, May 25

May 25 - Muscat - WC qual
Oman 2 (Al-Siyabi 48, Samir 67)
Syria 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Okada (Jap)
Oman: Al-Mazroi - M Khamis, Al-Hasni, Rabee, Al-Masori, Al-Harbi, Bait Dorbeen, Al-Siyabi, Y J Al-Mukhaini (Samir 64), Al-Dhabit, N Z Al-Mukhaini (Al-Yarbi 88).
Syria: Beiruti - Abaza, Khalil, Jablaui (Sayed 46), Serur, Haj (Bouchi 58), Nasser, Al-Said (Malki 86), Shehadeh, Zaher, Muhammad.

Saturday, May 26

May 26 - Bangkok - WC qual
Pakistan 1 (Arshad 20)
Lebanon 8 (F Antar 4, Ghazarian 11, 60, R Antar 32, 41, Dos Santos 46, 89, Silva 78)
HT: 1-4. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Kumbalingam (Sin)
Pakistan: Khan - M Riaz (Ghaffar 50), Shazad, Rasool, Asghar, Arshad (A Riaz 65), Majeed, Essa, Yousaf, Zaman, A Ullah (Adeel 46).
Lebanon: Fakih - Yenkibarian, Morgenstern, Naamani, Farah, Donabidian, Ghosson, Ghazarian (Silva 65), F Antar (Kassas 57), Salha, R Antar (Dos Santos 46).

May 26 - Manila - WC qual
Philippines 1 (Dona 20)
Laos 1 (Khouphachansy 81)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 1,000. **Ref:** Hidayat (Ins)
Philippines: Mercado - D Fegidero, R Tonog, Z Tonog, Dona, N Fegidero, Barsales (Pinero 31), Ocampo, De la Cruz, Allado, J Fegidero (J Tonog 69).
Laos: Thilavongsa - Sythanyalath (Khotsombath 46), Khamphouvanh, L Khanyyavong (Soucksombath 75), Phounsamay, Khouphachansy, Nalisack, Dalaphone Manik, Sengphanith, Sayyavong (Syyousack 46), Souliya.

May 26 - Bangkok - WC qual
Sri Lanka 0
Thailand 3 (Sakesan 37, Kiatisuk 51, 60)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Zhang (Chn)
Sri Lanka: Devinda - Fuard, Prabath (Sampath 80), Channa, Raheem, R Perera (Karunaratne 67), Steinwall, Imran, Anandakumar, Chatura, Kassun.
Thailand: Kittisak - Choketawee, Anuruck, Chukiat, Thersdak, Nirut, Kiatisuk, Surachai (Niweat 58), Dusit, Sakesan (Thawatchai 46), Tananchai. *Sent off: Anuruck 42min.*

Sunday, May 27

May 27 - Jakarta - WC qual
Indonesia 0
China 2 (Xie Hui 44, Wu Chengying 70)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Mane (Kuw)
Indonesia: Kartiko - Setyabudi, Sofyan, Toro, Purjianto, Nawawi (Nurdiantara 69), D Kurniawan, Sakti, Tecuari, Christiawan (Pamungkas 46), Ririn (Riyadi 75).
China: Jiang Jin (Fu Bin 81) - Wu Chengying, Fan Zhiyi (Shao Yi Jia 71), Li Tie, Ma Mingyu, Xie Hui, Li Wei Feng, Shen Si (Li Yao 68), Li Xiao Peng, Yang Cheng, Xu Yan Long.

Monday, May 28

May 28 - Bangkok - WC qual
Pakistan 0
Thailand 6 (Kiatisuk 10, 52, 57, 74, 77, Surachai 83)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Al-Marzouqi (UAE)
Pakistan: Khan - M Riaz, Shazad, Rasool, Asghar, Adeel (A Riaz 85), Arshad (Ibrahim 74), Essa (N Ullah 88), Yousaf, Zaman, Ghaffar. *Sent off: Khan 73min.*
Thailand: Kittisak - Thanongsak, Niweat, Chukiat, Thersdak, Tawan, Thawatchai, Kiatisuk (Surachai 78), Dusit, Sutee (Worrawoot 74), Tananchai (Nirut 57).

May 28 - Bangkok - WC qual
Sri Lanka 0
Lebanon 5 (Ghazarian 26, F Antar 37, Silva 50, Zein 65, Yenkibarian 83)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Kamikawa (Jap)
Sri Lanka: Devinda - Fuard, Prabath, Rauf, Channa, Raheem, R Perera (Velusami 90), Steinwall, Imran, Chatura, Kassun.
Lebanon: Fakih - Yenkibarian, Naamani, Farah, Hjeij (Salha 64), Silva, Ghazarian (Dos Santos 68), Kassas (Zein 58), F Antar, Hamdan, Osman.

Tuesday, May 29

May 29 - Bremen - friendly
Germany 2 (Asamoah 50, Baumann 56)
Slovakia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Colombo (Fra)
Germany: Lehmann - Rehmer (Kehl 46), Bode (Bohme 46), Ramelow, Nowotny, Baumann, Asamoah (Zickler 64), Ballack (Ziege 79), Deisler (Ricken 46), Neuville (Frings 64), Bierhoff (Klose 74).
Slovakia: Konig (Bucek 76) - Karhan, Smelko, Timko, Varga, Demo (Dzurik 46), Slovak (Bencik 46), Tomaschek (P Nemeth 65), Gresko, S Nemeth (Vittek), Janocko (Babnic 65).

Wednesday, May 30

May 30 - Bangkok - WC qual
Sri Lanka 3 (Kassun 6, 48, Channa 11)
Pakistan 1 (M Riaz 9)
HT: 2-1

May 30 - Bangkok - WC qual
Thailand 2 (Sakesan 73, Tawan 77)
Lebanon 2 (Ghazarian 35, Hjeij 87)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Kamikawa (Jap)
Thailand: Kittisak - Niweat, Choketawee, Anuruck, Chukiat, Tawan, Thawatchai, Kiatisuk, Surachai (Nirut 40), Dusit, Sakesan.
Lebanon: Fakih (Moussa 80) - Yenkibarian, Morgenstern (Naamani 50), Farah, Donabidian, Hjeij, Silva, Ghazarian, F Antar, R Antar, Osman (Zein 72).

Friday, June 1

June 1 - Algiers - AfNC qual
Algeria 3 (Saifi 6, pen 41, Kherkhache 80)
Angola 2 (Djiberato 29, Paulo Mendoca 60)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 20,000

Saturday, June 2

June 2 - Yerevan - WC qual
Armenia 0
Belarus 0
Att: 10,000. **Ref:** Guenov (Bul)
Armenia: Abrahamyan - Sukiasyan, Khodzhoyan, Demirchyan (A Dokhoyan 65), Vardanyan, R Hachatryan, Petrosyan, Minasyan (Artavazd Karamian 36), K Dokhoyan, Sarkisyan, Arman Karamian (Gevorgyan 69).
Belarus: Tumilovich - Yakhimovich, Ostrovsky, Lukhvich, Shtanyuk (Kulchy 84), Gurenko, Khatskevich, Bialkevich, Shuneiko (Romashchenko 80), Vasilyuk, Milevsky (Yaskovich 72).

June 2 - Brussels - WC qual
Belgium 3 (Wilmots 2, E Mpenza 12, Zemlinskis og 50)
Latvia 1 (Pahars 52)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Dobrinov (Bul)
Belgium: De Vlieger - Crasson, Valgaeren, Van Meir, P Van Der Heyden, Simons, Wilmots (Vermant 84), Goor (Boffin 69), E Mpenza (Sonck 79), Walem, Verheyen.
Latvia: Kolinko - Stepanovs, Astafjevs (Stolcers 67), Zemlinskis, Laizans, Blagonadezdins (Zakresevskis 69), Ivanovs, Bleidelis, Pahars (Miholaps 72), Rubins, Isakovs.

June 2 - Varazdin - WC qual
Croatia 4 (Vlaovic 3, Balaban 29, Suker pen 54, Vugrinec 61)
San Marino 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Timofejev (Est)
Croatia: Pletikosa - Saric, Jarni, R Kovac, Tudor, D Simic, Vugrinec (Vucko 76), Prosinecki, Vlaovic, N Kovac (Agic 64), Balaban (Suker 46).
San Marino: F Gasperoni - Della Balda, Marani, S Bacciocchi, Matteoni (Manzaroli 26), Albani, Gennari, Zonzini (R Selva 76), A Selva, B Gasperoni (Ugolini 86), Vannucci.

June 2 - Copenhagen - WC qual
Denmark 2 (E Sand 6, Tomasson 82)
Czech Republic 1 (Tyce 40)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 41,669. **Ref:** Merk (Ger)
Denmark: Sorensen - Heintze, Henriksen, Martin Laursen, Helveg, Tofting, Steen Nielsen (C Jensen 58), Tomasson, Jorgensen (Allan Nielsen 87), Rommedahl (Gronkjaer 73), E Sand.
Czech Republic: Srnicek - Johana, Tyce (Rada 60), Ujfalusi, Votava, Berger, Galasek, Nedved, Poborsky (Kuka 85), Lokvenc (Koller 68), Smicer.

June 2 - Tallinn - WC qual
Estonia 2 (Oper 65, Zelinski 78)
Holland 4 (Piiroja og 70, Van Nistelrooy 86, 90, Kluivert 89)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 9,323. **Ref:** Richards (Wal)
Estonia: Kaalma - Saviauk, Stepanov, Piiroja, U Rooba, Reim, Haavistu (Rahn 70), Novikov, Viikmae (Zelinski 29), Kristal, Oper.
Holland: Van der Sar - Reiziger, F De Boer, Melchiot, Zenden, Cocu, Makaay (Van Hooijdonk 70), Paauwe (Landzaat 60), Hasselbaink (Van Nistelrooy 60), Kluivert, Overmars.

June 2 - Toftir - WC qual
Faroe Islands 0
Switzerland 1 (Frei 80)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 4,000. **Ref:** McDonald (Sco)
Faroe Islands: Mikkelsen - Johannesen, J B Hansen, a Borg, H F Hansen, O Hansen, Benjaminsen, J Johnsson, C Jacobsen, Arge (J R Jacobsen 78), J Petersen (H Petersen 84).
Switzerland: Pascolo - Zellweger, Quentin, Henchoz, P Muller, Vogel, Sesa (N'Kufo 57), Wicky, Lombardo, Sforza (Lonfat 68), Frei (J Magnin 82).

June 2 - Helsinki - WC qual
Finland 2 (Forssell 28, 43)
Germany 2 (Ballack pen 69, Jancker 72)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 35,774. **Ref:** Jol (Hol)
Finland: A Niemi - Pasanen, Nylund, Hyypia, Tihinen, Riihilahti (Gronlund 79), Nurmela (Johansson 72), R Rantanen, Forssell, Litmanen, Kolkka (Kuqi 84).
Germany: Kahn - Rehmer, Bode (Ziege 69), Linke, Nowotny, Ramelow, Asamoah, Ballack, Jancker (Bierhoff 82), Ricken, Neuville (Klose 62).

June 2 - Libreville - WC qual
Gabon 1 (Cousin 57)
Tunisia 1 (Sellami 67)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 16,000

June 2 - Tbilisi - WC qual
Georgia 1 (Gakhokidze 80)
Italy 2 (Delvecchio 45, Totti 66)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 28,000. **Ref:** Iturralde (Spa)
Georgia: Zoidze - Silagadze, Abramidze, Rekhviashvili, Khizanishvili (Gakhokidze 80), Kaladze, Nemsadze (S Arveladze 35), Kavelashvili, Ketsbaia, Kobiashvili, Menteshashvili (A Arveladze 61).
Italy: Buffon, Pancaro, Maldini, Tacchinardi, Fabio Cannavaro, Nesta (Materazzi 73), Zambrotta, Tomassi, Delvecchio (Montella 79), Totti, Del Piero (Di Livio 59).

June 2 - Iraklion - WC qual
Greece 1 (Machlas 72)
Albania 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 13,500. **Ref:** Levnikov (Rus)
Greece: Nikopolidis - Ouzounidis, Venetidis, Goumas, Dabizas, Patsatzoglou, Georgiadis (Basinas 86), Zagorakis, Alexandris (Haristeas 61), Limberopoulos (Machlas 46), Karagounis.
Albania: Strakosha - Lala, Cipi, Xhumba, Fakaj, Hasi (Skela 76), Bellai, Bujhaz, Murati, F Vata, Tare (Bogdani 71).

June 2 - Reykjavik - WC qual
Iceland 3 (Gudmundsson 7, Dadason 38, E Gudjohnsen 68)
Malta 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 3,554. **Ref:** Lajuks (Lat)
Iceland: Arason - A Helgason, Vidarson, Gretarsson, Gunnarsson, R Kristinsson (Kolvidsson 74), Gudmundsson, E Sverrisson (Marteinsson 74), E Gudjohnsen, H Sigurdsson, Dadason (H Helguson 74).
Malta: Muscat - Said, Turner, Spiteri, Theuma, Dimech, Agius, Giglio (Suda 74), Michael Mifsud, Brincat (Camilleri 46), Mallia (Nwoko 69).

June 2 - Nairobi - AfNC qual
Kenya 1 (Okoth 5)
Morocco 1 (Bassir 43)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 45,000

June 2 - Vaduz - WC qual
Liechtenstein 0
Israel 3 (Revivo 2, Tal 6, Nimni 17)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Isaksen (Far)
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Ospelt, Martin Stocklasa, Ritter, Zech, Michael Stocklasa, T Beck (Gerster 85), R Buchel (M Beck 71), H Hasler (D'Elia 65), Telser, Gigon.
Israel: Davidovich - Ben-Dayan (Badir 65), Talker, Benado, Gershon, Keisi, Zeituni, Revivo (Mizrahi 74), Nimni, Berkovic (Benayoun 65), Tal.

June 2 - Skopje - WC qual
Macedonia 2 (Sakiri pen 20, M Krstev 65)
Moldova 2 (Pogreban 10, Barburos 72)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 3,000. **Ref:** Van Hulten (Hol)
Macedonia: Zekir - Stavrevski, Stojanov, Guzelov, Nikolovski (Trajanov 46), Z Jovanovski, Serafimovski (G Jovanovski 70), M Krstev, S Krstev, Sakiri, Beciri (Nacevski 46).
Moldova: Romanenco - Covalenco, Rebeja, Testemitanu (Osipenco 65), Sosnovschi, Stroenco, Sischin (Barburos 70), Catinsus, Pogreban (Epureanu 46) Gaidamasciuc, Clescenco. *Sent off: Sosnovschi 90min.*

June 2 - Benin City - AfNC qual
Nigeria 1 (Akwuegbu 4)
Madagascar 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 15,000

June 2 - Belfast - WC qual
Northern Ireland 0
Bulgaria 1 (Georgi Ivanov 52)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 7,663. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Northern Ireland: Taylor - Nolan (Quinn 86), A Hughes, Griffin, Murdock, Johnson, Gillespie, Lennon (Mulryne 78), Healy, M Hughes, Elliott (Ferguson 78).
Bulgaria: Zdravkov - Kishishev (Peev 23), Markov, Chomakov, Pazin, B Ivanov, M Hristov (Stoicho Stoilov 87), M Petkov, Georgi Ivanov, Balakov, M Petrov (Kirilov 77).

June 2 - Asuncion - WC qual
Paraguay 1 (Paredes 90)
Chile 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Badilla (CR)
Paraguay: Chilavert - Arce, Sarabia, Ayala, Caniza - Quintana (Amarilla 77), Paredes, Acuna, Alvarenga - Santa Cruz (Cuevas, 66), Brizuela (Gonzalez 46). *Sent off: Ayala 70min.*
Chile: S Vargas - Reyes, J Vargas, Contreras - Pozo, Osorio, Villaseca, Perez (Valenzuela 78), Tello - Montecinos, Navia (Neira 63).

June 2 - Lima - WC qual
Peru 1 (Pizarro 2)
Ecuador 2 (Mendez 12, Delgado 90)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 60,000. **Ref:** Maruffo (Mex)
Peru: Miranda - Pajuelo, Rebosio, Percy Olivares (Hidalgo 62) - Solano, Jayo, Palacios, Ciurlizza - Mendoza (Muchtrigo 74), Pizarro, Maestri (Silva 46).
Ecuador: Cevallos - U De la Cruz, I Hurtado, Espinosa, Guerron- Obregon (Guagua 71), Tenorio, Chala (Aguinaga 86), Mendez - Delgado, Kaviedes (Fernandez 81). *Sent off: Mendez 81min.*

June 2 - Dublin - WC qual
Rep Ireland 1 (Roy Keane 65)
Portugal 1 (Figo 79)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Fisker (Den)
Rep of Ireland: Given - Carr, Harte, Dunne, Staunton, Roy Keane, G Kelly, Kinsella (Doherty 79), Quinn (Holland 75), Robbie Keane (Duff 60), Kilbane.
Portugal: Ricardo - Jorge Costa, Rui Jorge (Joao Pinto 73), Beto, Litos (Boa Morte 88), Frechaut, Figo, Pedro Barbosa (Capucho 66), Pauleta, Rui Costa, Petit.

June 2 - Bucharest - WC qual
Romania 2 (Niculae 3, 53)
Hungary 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 21,000. **Ref:** Poulat (Fra)
Romania: Stelea - Contra, Radoi (Prodan 64), Dumitru, Chivu, Ciobotariu, Niculae, D Munteanu, Moldovan, Codrea, Ilie (C Munteanu 75).
Hungary: Kiraly - G Korsos, C Feher, Matyus, V Sebok, T Peto, Sowunmi (Kabat 73), Dardai, Horvath (A Korsos 46), Lisztes, Hamar (Dombi 41).

June 2 - Moscow - WC qual
Russia 1 (Kovtun 25)
Yugoslavia 1 (Mijatovic 32)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 65,000. **Ref:** Fandel (Ger)
Russia: Nigmatullin - Khokhlov, Chugainov, Smertin, Alenichev, Kovtun, Onopko, Karpin, Titov, Mostovoi, Beschastnykh (Buznikin 72).
Yugoslavia: Radakovic - Mirkovic (Bunjevcevic 85), Djorovic, Obradovic, Djukic, Dmitrovic, Lazetic (Drulovic 75), I Tomic, Mihajlovic, Mijatovic (Kezman 64), Milosevic.

June 2 - Ljubljana - WC qual
Slovenia 2 (Zahovic 35, pen 65)
Luxembourg 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Brugger (Aut)
Slovenia: Simeunovic - Milinovic, Galic, Knavs, Novak, Ceh, Karic (Rudonja 46), Zahovic, Pavlin, Cimerotic (Osterc 80), Acimovic (Pavlovic 62).
Luxembourg: Gillet - Schauls, L Deville, Theis, Strasser, Saibene, Peters, Holtz, Huss, Cardoni (Braun 82), Schneider.

June 2 - Oviedo - WC qual
Spain 4 (Hierro 26, Javi Moreno 76, Raul 89, Diego Tristan 90)
Bosnia-Herzegovina 1 (Beslija 41)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Olsen (Nor)
Spain: Canizares - Manuel Pablo, Hierro, Nadal, Juanfran - Mendieta (Munitis 58), Ivan Helguera (Valeron 46), Guardiola, Luis Enrique (Javi Moreno 76) - Raul, Diego Tristan.
Bosnia: Piplica - Beslija, Varesanovic, Hibic, Hujdorovic, Music (Hota 70) - Mujcin, Barbarez, Akrapovic - Bolic (Demirovic 81), Baljic.

June 2 - Stockholm - WC qual
Sweden 2 (Allback 45, 51)
Slovakia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 34,327. **Ref:** Garcia Aranda (Spa)
Sweden: Hedman - Mellberg, P Andersson, Saarenpaa, Lucic, Linderoth (A Svensson 90), Alexandersson (Jonsson 73), Magnus Svensson, Ljungberg, Allback (D Andersson 88), Larsson.
Slovakia: Konig - Karhan, Dzurik, Timko, Varga, Demo (Janocko 58), Labant, Tomaschek, Gresko (Babnic 82), S Nemeth (Vittek 58), Pinte.

June 2 - Istanbul - WC qual
Turkey 3 (Tayfun 1, Oktay 29, Hakan Sukur 33)
Azerbaijan 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 17,386. **Ref:** Ansuategui (Spa)
Turkey: Rustu - Umit Davala, Bulent, Alpay, Abdullah, Tayfun, Okan (Basturk 61), Tugay, Emre (Ergun 80), Hakan Sukur, Oktay (Hasan 38).
Azerbaijan: Gasanzade - A Mamedov (Niftaliev 63), Akhmedov, R Mamedov, Yunusov, Guliev, M Kurbanov, K Kurbanov, Tagizade (R Guliev 81), Mardanov, Rzaev (Orujov 51).

June 2 - Kampala - AfNC qual
Uganda 0
Togo 3 (Kader 34, 70, Kouadji 48)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,000

June 2 - Kyiv - WC qual
Ukraine 0
Norway 0
Att: 42,000. **Ref:** Maric (Cro)
Ukraine: Shovkovskyi - Starostyak, Parfyonov, Holovko, Vaschuk, Dmytrulin, Shevchenko, Tymoshchuk, Zubov, Yashkin (Rebrov 46), Vorobei (Spivak 68).
Norway: Myhre - Basma, Hoftun, H Berg, Riseth, Rudi, Carew, Leonhardsen, E Bakke, Andersen, Strand (Heistad 78).

June 2 - Cardiff - WC qual
Wales 1 (Blake 13)
Poland 2 (Olisadebe 32, Kryszalowicz 72)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 44,000. **Ref:** Ersoy (Tur)
Wales: P Jones - Page (Jenkins 84), Melville, Symons, Barnard (M Jones 79) - Savage, Pembridge, Speed, Giggs - Hartson, Blake.
Poland: Dudek - Klos, J Bak, Hajto, Michal Zewlakow - Iwan, Zdebel (Krzynowek 63), A Bak, Kozminski - Juskowiak (Kryszalowicz 54), Olisadebe (Marcin Zewlakow 90).

June 2 - Chingola - AfNC qual
Zambia 0
Namibia 0
Att: 20,000

Sunday, June 3

June 3 - Buenos Aires - WC qual
Argentina 3 (Kily Gonzalez 23, Claudio Lopez 35, Crespo 38)
Colombia 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** Sanchez (Chl)
Argentina: Cavallero - Vivas, Ayala, Pochettino - Simeone, Zanetti, Veron (Gallardo 84), Sorin, Kily Gonzalez - Claudio Lopez (Almar 82), Crespo (Delgado 48).
Colombia: O Cordoba - Martinez, Dinas, Yepes, Bedoya - Serna, Rincon, Viveros (J Gonzalez 46), F Asprilla (Ferreira 46) - Castillo, Angel (Murillo 77).

June 3 - La Paz - WC qual
Bolivia 5 (Baldivieso 33, 69, Botero 36, 52, Raul Justiniano 39)
Venezuela 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Carpio Guevara (Ecu)
Bolivia: Arias - Raldes, J Pena, Garcia - Ribeiro (Rojas 85), Justiniano, Baldivieso (D Pena 90), Calustro, Colque - Lider Paz (Cardenas 73), Botero.
Venezuela: Sanhouse - Valenilla, Rey, R Mea Vitali, Martinez - Vera, M Mea Vitali, Arango (Casseres 67), Gonzalez (Alvarado 54), Paez (Jimenez 42) - Rondon.

June 3 - Bujumbura - AfNC qual
Burundi 0
Burkina Faso 0
Att: 15,000

June 3 - Pointe Noire - AfNC qual
Congo 0
Mauritius 0
Att: 10,000

June 3 - Cairo - AfNC qual
Egypt 3 (Hossam 20, 51, Hosni 58)
Sudan 2 (Joseph 69, Gabra pen 89)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 13,000

June 3 - Maseru - AfNC qual
Lesotho 0
DR Congo 0
Att: 20,000

June 3 - Monrovia - AfNC qual
Liberia 1 (Makor pen 48)
South Africa 1 (Rabutia 39)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** Bouchardeau (Ngr)
Liberia: Tokpah - Kojo, Gebro, D Sebwe, Nagbe, K Sebwe, Makor, Dixon (Brown 35), Sarr (Prince Daye 46), Seator, Yenay (Weah 46).
South Africa: Arendse - Lekgetho, Booth, Rabutla (Nzama 74), McCarthy, Mokoena, Mnguni, Sheppard, Ngake (Bianchi 82), Raselemane (Nomvete 53), August.

June 3 - Tripoli - AfNC qual
Libya 0
Ivory Coast 3 (Kader Keita 21, Djah 31, 67)
HT: 0-2

June 3 - Harare - AfNC qual
Zimbabwe 1 (Wilfred Mugeyi 15)
Ghana 2 (Ansah 39, Boakye 89)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 35,000

Monday, June 4

June 4 - Auckland - WC qual
Solomon Islands 9 (Suri 14, P Daudau 19, 54, 75, Menapi 31, 52, 85, Firisua 84, Konofilla 89)
Cook Islands 1 (Temiha 4)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 1,542. **Ref:** Hugo (Aus)
Solomon Islands: Aefi - Molea (Firisua 46), S Daudau, Samani, Menapi, Walta, Suri (Konofilla 76), Toata (Wickham 65), P Daudau, Omokirio, Koto.
Cook Islands: T Jamieson - M Jamieson, Pareanga, N Mani, Dickenson, J Chambers, Pukoku (S Mani 76), D Shepherd (Enjoy 90), Nand, J Shepherd (Teiva 68), Temiha.

June 4 - Auckland - WC qual
Vanuatu 1 (Lauru 56)
Tahiti 6 (Senechal 26, Bennett 36, 41, 81, Amaru 52, Tagawa 82)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 400. **Ref:** Shah (Fij)
Vanuatu: Chilia - Ben, Demas (Bruno 71), Lauru, Bibi, Poida, Noel (Rarai 49), Natuoivi, G Maki, Mermer, P Maki (Iwai 53).
Tahiti: Tahutini - Fatupua, Atger, Paama (Maurirere 79), Boene, Garcia, Amaru (Tauihara 85), Bennett, Auraa, Tinorua, Senechal (Tagawa 65).

Wednesday, June 6

June 6 - Tirana - WC qual
Albania 0
Germany 2 (Rehmer 28, Ballack 68)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,800. **Ref:** Veissiere (Fra)
Albania: Strakosha - Lala, Cipi, Xhumba (Bellai 46), R Vata, Hasi (Skela 62), Haxhi, (Muka 81), Bushi, Murati, F Vata, Tare. *Sent off: Murati 34min.*
Germany: Kahn - Rehmer, Ziege, Linke, Nowotny, Ramelow, Asamoah (Ricken 70), Ballack, Jancker, Deisler (Baumann 84), Neuville (Zickler 46). *Sent off: Ramelow 34min.*

June 6 - Yerevan - WC qual
Armenia 1 (Petrosyan 11)
Poland 1 (Kaluzny 4)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Romain (Blg)
Armenia: Abrahamyan - Sukiasyan, Khodzhoyan, Hovsepyan, Vardanyan (Demirchyan 41), R Hachatryan, Petrosyan, A Dokhoyan (Ara Hakopyan 33; Gevorgyan 66), K Dokhoyan, Sarkisyan, Artavazd Karamian. *Sent off: Sarkisyan 58min, Khodzhoyan 87min, Gevorgyan 87min.*
Poland: Dudek - Kukielka, J Bak, Michal Zewlakow, Kozminski (Zdebel 84), Hajto, Swierczewski, A Bak, Juskowiak (Marcin Zewlakow 64), Kaluzny (Krzynowek 36), Kryszalowicz. *Sent off: J Bak 87min.*

June 6 - Baku - WC qual
Azerbaijan 2 (V Vasilyev 26, Tagizade 55)
Slovakia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Vollquartz (Den)
Azerbaijan: Gasanzade - Niftaliyev, Yunusov, Akhemdov, R Mamedov, Yadullayev, M Kurbanov, Tagizade (R Guliev 82), Getman, K Kurbanov (F Ismailov 89), V Vasilyev (Rizayev 75).
Slovakia: Konig - Karhan, Dzurik, Vittek (H Bencik 69), Varga, Labant, Janocko, Tomaschek, Gresko, S Nemeth, Pinte (Babnic 62).

CONFEDERATIONS

Group A

May 30 - Taegu, South Korea - Confed Cup
France 5 (Marlet 9, Vieira 19, Anelka 34, Djorkaeff 80, Wiltord 90)
South Korea 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 61,500. **Ref:** Al-Ghandour (Egy)
France: Rame - Sagnol, Desailly, Silvestre, Lizarazu - Vieira, Carriere, Pires (Dacourt 84) - Anelka, Marlet (Wiltord 67), Dugarry (Djorkaeff 74).
South Korea: Lee Jae-woon - Choi Sung-yong, Song Chong-gug, Kim Tae-young (Ha Seok-ju 76), Lee Min-sung, Hong Myung-bo - Yoo Sang-chul, Lee Young-pyo (Hwang Sun-hong 46), Park Ji-sung, Ko Jong-su (An Hyo-yeon 70), Seol Ki-hyeon.

May 30 - Suwon, South Korea - Confed Cup
Mexico 0
Australia 2 (Murphy 18, Skoko 54)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 3,000. **Ref:** Tangawarima (Zim)
Mexico: O Sanchez - Suarez, Oteo, D Davino, M A Ruiz (Osorno 48), Juan P Rodriguez, Abundis, Borgetti, Pardo, Coyote (Victorino 48), V Ruiz (Reyes 64).
Australia: Schwarzer - Muscat, Okon, T Vidmar, Popovic, Skoko (Foxe 70), Lazaridis (Thompson 78), Zdrilic (Chipperfield 64), Murphy, Corica, Zane.

June 1 - Taegu, South Korea - Confed Cup
Australia 1 (Zane 59)
France 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 44,400. **Ref:** Batres (Gtm)
Australia: Schwarzer - Muscat, Moore, T Vidmar, Popovic, Okon, Skoko (Bresciano 78), Lazaridis, Emerton, Corica, Zane (Aloisi 86).
France: Coupet - Camara, Leboeuf, Karembeu, Gillet, Djorkaeff (Vieira 86), Brechet, Dacourt (Pires 73), Wiltord, Nee (Anelka 70), Robert. *Sent off: Leboeuf 75min.*

June 1 - Ulsan, South Korea - Confed Cup
South Korea 2 (Hwang Sun-hong 57, Yoo Sang-chul 90)
Mexico 1 (V Ruiz 80)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 43,000. **Ref:** Dallas (Sco)
South Korea: Lee Woon-jae - Kang Chul, Choi Sung-yong, Song Chong-gug, Kim Tae-young, Hong Myung-bo - Yoo Sang-chul, Park Ji-sung, Ko Jong-su (Lee Young-pyo 68) - Kim Do-hoon, Hwang Sun-hong (Seol Ki-hyeon 77).
Mexico: O Sanchez - Suarez, D Davino, Pardo, Valdez - Rangel, Juan P Rodriguez (V Ruiz 61), Victorino - Borgetti (M A Ruiz 52), Osorno (Abundis 70), De Nigris.

June 3 - Ulsan, South Korea - Confed Cup
France 4 (Wiltord 8, Carriere 62, 83, Pires 71)
Mexico 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 28,864. **Ref:** Bujsaim (UAE)
France: Landreau - Sagnol, Desailly, Silvestre, Lizarazu - Vieira, Pires (Dacourt 84), Anelka, Carriere - Marlet (Robert 64), Wiltord (Djorkaeff 77).
Mexico: O Sanchez - Suarez, D Duilio, Pardo, Valdez - Rangel, Abundis, Victorino (Juan P Rodriguez 75) - M A Ruiz (Reyes 63), De Nigris (Borgetti 46), V Ruiz.

June 3 - Suwon, South Korea - Confed Cup
South Korea 1 (Hwang Sun-hong 25)
Australia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 42,754. **Ref:** Acosta (Col)
South Korea: Lee Woon-jae - Song Chong-gug, Lee Min-sung, Hong Myung-bo, Kim Tae-young - Choi Sung-yong, Lee Young-pyo, Park Ji-sung - Seol Ki-hyeon, Hwang Sung-hong, Kim Do-hoon (Choi Yong-soo 63).
Australia: Schwarzer - Muscat, Moore, Murphy, T Vidmar - Bresciano, Okon (A Vidmar 80), Foxe (Zdrilic 46) - Emerton, Zane, Corica (Chipperfield 46). *Sent off: Zane 85min.*

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	3	2	0	1	9	1	6
Australia	3	2	0	1	3	1	6
South Korea	3	2	0	1	3	6	6
Mexico	3	0	0	3	1	8	0

CUP

Group B

May 31 - Ibaraki, Japan - Confed Cup
Brazil 2 (Washington 53, Miguel Carlos 57)
Cameroon 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,519. **Ref:** Krug (Ger)
Brazil: Dida - Ze Maria, Lucio (Claudio Cacapa 76), Edmilson, Leo - Leomar, Vampeta (Fabio 46), Ramon - Anderson, Vagner (Carlos Miguel 46), Washington.
Cameroon: Alioum - Wome, Song, Kalla, Njanka - Njitap, Alnoudji (Epalle 76), Foe, Olembe - Eto'o, Mboma (Job 77).

May 31 - Niigata, Japan - Confed Cup
Japan 3 (Ono 57, Nishizawa 60, Morishima 88)
Canada 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 39,006. **Ref:** Micallef (Aus)
Japan: Kawaguchi - Uemura (Nakayama 38), Morioka, Inamoto, H Nakata, Morishima, Nishizawa, Ito (Myojin 67), K Nakata (A Miura 81), Toda, Ono.
Canada: Forrest - Watson, De Vos, Bent, Stalteri, Xausa (Corazzin 80), Brennan, Fletcher, Imhof (Nsaliwa 63), Peschisolido, McKenna.

June 2 - Ibaraki, Japan - Confed Cup
Canada 0
Brazil 0
Att: 12,095. **Ref:** Lu Jun (Chn)
Canada: Forrest - Watson (Fletcher 69), Menezes, De Vos, Bent, Stalteri, Dasovic, Xausa (Corazzin 46), Brennan, Peschisolido (Derosario 84), McKenna.
Brazil: Dida - Ze Maria, Lucio, Edmilson, Leo, Leomar, Fabio, Ramon (Magno Alves 64), Anderson (Leandro 22), Carlos Miguel (Robert 70), Washington.

June 2 - Niigata, Japan - Confed Cup
Cameroon 0
Japan 2 (Suzuki 8, 65)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 39,430. **Ref:** Tellez
Cameroon: Alioum - Wome (Tchato 76), Song, Kalla, Njanka, Njitap (Epalle 50), Eto'o, Mboma, Alnoudji, Foe, Olembe (Job 50).
Japan: Kawagushi - Matsuda, Morioka, Inamoto, H Nakata (Morishima 61), Nishizawa (Nakayama 73), K Nakata, Myojin, Toda, Ono (Hattori 85), Suzuki.

June 4 - Ibaraki, Japan - Confed Cup
Brazil 0
Japan 0
Att: 37,470. **Ref:** Milton Nielsen (Den)
Brazil: Dida - Ze Maria, Lucio, Edmilson, Leo - Leomar, Fabio, Ramon (Julio Batista 61) - Leandro, Carlos Miguel (Robert 73), Washington (Magno Alves 78).
Japan: Tsuzuki - Uemara, Matsuda, Hattori, Hato - H Nakata, Ito, Myojin, Ono (K Nakata 46) - Yamashita (Nakayama 60), Suzuki (Morishima 46).

June 4 - Niigata, Japan - Confed Cup
Cameroon 2 (Tchoutang 48, Mboma pen 83)
Canada 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 15,882. **Ref:** Ruales (Ecu)
Cameroon: Songo'o - Song, Kalla, Njanka, Tchoutang (Mboma 71), Njitap, Epalle (Eto'o 75), Alnoudji, Foe (Wome 71), N'Diefi, Olembe.
Canada: Forrest - Menezes, De Vos, Bent, Stalteri, Dasovic, Corazzin (Peschisolido 76), Brennan, Fletcher, Imhof, Kusch (Derosario 46).

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Japan	3	2	1	0	5	0	7
Brazil	3	1	2	0	2	0	5
Cameroon	3	1	0	2	2	4	3
Canada	3	0	1	2	0	5	1

Semi-finals

June 7 - Yokohama - Confed Cup
Japan 1 (H Nakata 43)
Australia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 48,699. **Ref:** Tellez (Mex)
Japan: Kawaguchi - Matsuda, Morioka (Uemura 22), Inamoto, H Nakata, Nishizawa (Morishima 80), K Nakata, Toda, Hato, Ono (Hattori 55), Suzuki.
Sent off: Suzuki 55min.
Australia: Schwarzer - Muscat, Moore, Okon, T Vidmar, Popovic, Lazaridis, Zdrilic (Thompson-71), Bresciano (Sterjovski 60), Corica, Chipperfield (Aloisi 60). *Sent off: Moore 88min.*

June 7 - Suwon, South Korea - Confed Cup
France 2 (Pires 7, Desailly 54)
Brazil 1 (Ramon 30)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 34,527. **Ref:** Ghandour (Egy)
France: Rame - Sagnol, Desailly, Leboeuf, Lizarazu -Vieira, Karembeu, Anelka, Djorkaeff (Carriere 61) - Pires, Wiltord (Robert 87).
Brazil: Dida - Ze Maria, Lucio, Edmilson, Leo - Leomar, Fabio, Ramon - Leandro (Vampeta 57), Carlos Miguel (Robert 69), Washington.

Third-place play-off

June 9 - Ulsan, South Korea - Confed Cup
Australia 1 (Murphy 84)
Brazil 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 28,520. **Ref:** Krug (Ger)
Australia: Schwarzer - T Vidmar, Popovic, Skoko (Bresciano 61), Lazaridis, Zdrilic, Murphy, Horvat, Corica (Sterjovski 61), Chipperfield, Zane.
Brazil: Dida - Ze Maria, Edmilson, Vampeta, Carlos Miguel (Julio Batista 66), Claudio Cacapa, Leo, Fabio (Leandro 90), Ramon, Washington, Magno Alves.

FINAL

June 10 - Yokohama - Confed Cup
Japan 0
France 1 (Vieira 29)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 65,335. **Ref:** Bujsaim (UAE)
Japan: Kawaguchi - Matsuda, Morioka, K Nakata - Inamoto (A Miura 46), Ito, Toda, Hato, Ono (Kubo 60) - Morishima, Nishizawa (Nakayama 74).
France: Rame - Lizarazu, Desailly, Leboeuf, Karembeu - Vieira, Djorkaeff (Carriere 65), Pires, Marlet (Robert 58) - Anelka, Wiltord.

SQUADS

AUSTRALIA

1 Mark SCHWARZER (G, Middlesbrough, Eng)
2 Kevin MUSCAT (D, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Eng)
3 Craig MOORE (D, Rangers, Sco)
4 Paul OKON (M, Middlesbrough, Eng)
5 Tony VIDMAR (D, Rangers, Sco)
6 Tony POPOVIC (D, Sanfrecce Hiroshima, Jap)
7 Josip SKOKO (M, Genk, Big)
8 Stan LAZARIDIS (M, Birmingham City, Eng)
9 John ALOISI (F, Coventry City, Eng)
10 Brett EMERTON (M, Feyenoord, Hol)
11 David ZDRILIC (F, Unterhaching, Ger)
12 Zeljko KALAC (G, Roda JC, Hol)
13 Marco BRESCIANO (M, Empoli, Ita)
14 Shaun MURPHY (D, Sheffield Utd, Eng)
15 Hayden FOXE (D, West Ham Utd, Eng)
16 Steve HORVAT (D, Carlton Blue)
17 Steve CORICA (M, Sanfrecce Hiroshima, Jap)
18 Scott CHIPPERFIELD (F, Wollongong Wolves)
19 Aurelio VIDMAR (M, Adelaide Force)
20 Clayton ZANE (F, Molde, Nor)
21 Archie THOMPSON (F, Marconi)
22 Mile STERJOVSKI (F, Sedan, Fra)
23 Frank JURIC (G, Bayer Leverkusen, Ger)

BRAZIL

1 DIDA (G, Milan, Ita)
2 ZE MARIA (D, Perugia, Ita)
3 LUCIO (D, Bayer Leverkusen, Ger)
4 EDMILSON (D, Lyon, Fra)
5 LEOMAR (M, Sport Recife)
6 CESAR (D, Sao Caetano)
7 LEANDRO (F, Fiorentina, Ita)
8 VAMPETA (M, Paris Saint-Germain, Fra)
9 ANDERSON (F, Lyon, Fra)
10 ROBERT (M, Santos)
11 ZE ROBERTO (M, Bayer Leverkusen, Ger)
12 CARLOS GERMANO (G, Portuguesa)
13 EVANILSON (D, Borussia Dortmund, Ger)
14 CESAR BELLI (D, Rennes)
15 CLAUDIO CACAPA (D, Lyon, Fra)
16 LEO (D, Santos)
17 VAGNER (M, Celta Vigo, Spa)
18 FABIO (M, Internacional)
19 JULIO BATISTA (M, Sao Paulo)
20 RAMON (M, Fluminense)
21 WASHINGTON (F, Ponte Preta)
22 MAGNO ALVES (F, Fluminense)
23 FABIO COSTA (G, Santos)

CAMEROON

1 Boukar ALIOUM (G, Samsunspor, Tur)
2 Bill TCHATO (D, Montpellier, Fra)
3 Pierre WOME (D, Bologna, Ita)
4 Rigobert SONG (D, West Ham Utd, Eng)
5 Raymond KALLA (D, Extremadura, Spa)
6 Pierre NJANKA (D, Strasbourg, Fra)
7 Bernard TCHOUTANG (M, Roda JC, Hol)
8 Geremi NJITAP (M, Real Madrid, Spa)
9 Samuel ETO'O (F, Real Mallorca, Spa)
10 Patrick MBOMA (F, Parma, Ita)
11 Lauren ETAME-MAYER (M, Arsenal, Eng)
12 Jacques SONGO'O (G, Deportivo La Coruna, Spa)
13 Daniel NTIECHE (D, Sable Batie)
14 Joel EPALLE (M, Panahaiki, Gre)
15 Nicolas ALNOUDJI (M, Rizespor, Tur)
16 Olivier TCHATCHOUA (D, Sable Batie)
17 Marc-Vivien FOE (M, Lyon, Fra)
18 Patrice ABANDA (D, Sparta Prague, Cze)
19 Michel PENSEE (D, Anzhi Makhachkala, Rus)
20 Salomon OLEMBE (M, Nantes, Fra)
21 Joseph-Desire JOB (F, Middlesbrough, Eng)
22 Daniel NGOM KOME (M, Levante, Spa)
23 Idriss KAMENI (G, Le Havre, Fra)

CANADA

1 Craig FORREST (G, West Ham Utd, Eng)
2 Paul FENWICK (D, Hibernian, Sco)
3 Mark WATSON (D, DC United, USA)
4 Tony MENEZES (D, Botafogo, Bra)
5 Jason DE VOS (D, Dundee Utd, Sco)
6 Jason BENT (M, Colorado Rapids, USA)
7 Paul STALTERI (M, Werder Bremen, Ger)
8 Nick DASOVIC (M, St Johnstone, Sco)
9 Carlo CORRAZIN (F, Oldham Athletic, Eng)
10 Davide XAUSA (M, Inverness Caledonian Thistle, Sco)
11 Jim BRENNAN (M, Nottingham Forest, Eng)
12 Pat ONSTAD (G, Dundee Utd, Sco)
13 Carl FLETCHER (D, Montreal Impact)
14 Daniel IMHOF (M, St Gallen, Swi)
15 Richard HASTINGS (M, Inverness Caledonian Thistle, Sco)
16 Garett KUSCH (F, Hoenefoss, Nor)
17 Dwayne DE ROSARIO (F, San Jose Earthquakes, USA)
18 Tam NSALIWA (M, Nurnberg, Ger)
19 Paul PESCHISOLIDO (F, Sheffield Utd, Eng)
20 Kevin McKENNA (D, Energie Cottbus, Ger)
21 Marc BIRCHAM (M, Millwall, Eng)
23 Mike FRANKS (G, Hibernian, Sco)

FRANCE

1 Ulrich RAME (G, Bordeaux)
2 Willy SAGNOL (D, Bayern Munich, Ger)
3 Bixente LIZARAZU (D, Bayern Munich, Ger)
4 Patrick VIEIRA (M, Arsenal, Eng)
5 Martin DJETOU (D, Monaco)
6 Youri DJORKAEFF (M, Kaiserslautern, Ger)
7 Robert PIRES (M, Arsenal, Eng)
8 Marcel DESAILLY (D, Chelsea, Eng)
9 Nicolas ANELKA (F, Paris Saint-Germain)
10 Eric CARRIERE (M, Nantes)
11 Sylvain WILTORD (F, Arsenal, Eng)
12 Gregory COUPET (G, Lyon)
13 Mikael SILVESTRE (D, Manchester Utd, Eng)
14 Thierry HENRY (F, Arsenal, Eng)
15 Jeremy BRECHET (M, Lyon)
16 Olivier DACOURT (M, Leeds Utd, Eng)
17 Steve MARLET (F, Lyon)
18 Frank LEBOEUF (D, Chelsea, Eng)
19 Christian KAREMBEU (D, Middlesbrough, Eng)
20 Zoumana CAMARA (D, Marseille)
21 Christophe DUGARRY (F, Bordeaux)
22 Laurent ROBERT (F, Paris Saint-Germain)
23 Mickael LANDREAU (G, Nantes)

JAPAN

1 Yoshikatsu KAWAGUCHI (G, Yokohama F Marinos)
2 Seigo NARAZAKI (G, Nagoya Grampus Eight)
3 Ryota TSUZUKI (G, Gamba Osaka)
4 Toshihiro HATTORI (D, Jubilo Iwata)
5 Kenichi UEMURA (D, Sanfrecce Hiroshima)
6 Ryuzo MORIOKA (D, Shimizu S-Pulse)
7 Yasuhiro HATO (D, Yokohama F Marinos)
8 Naoki MATSUDA (D, Yokohama F Marinos)
9 Yuji NAKAZAWA (D, Tokyo Verdy 1969)
10 Koji NAKATA (D, Kashima Antlers)
11 Hiroaki MORISHIMA (M, Cerezo Osaka)
12 Atsuhiro MIURA (M, Tokyo Verdy 1969)
13 Teruyoshi ITO (M, Shimizu S-Pulse)
14 Daisuke OKU (M, Jubilo Iwata)
15 Hidetoshi NAKATA (M, Roma, Ita)
16 Kazuyuki TODA (M, Shimizu S-Pulse)
17 Tomokazu MYOJIN (M, Kashiwa Reysol)
18 Junichi INAMOTO (M, Gamba Osaka)
19 Shinji ONO (M, Urawa Reds)
20 Masashi NAKAYAMA (F, Jubilo Iwata)
21 Akinori NISHIZAWA (F, Espanyol, Spa)
22 Atsushi YANAGISAWA (F, Kashima Antlers)
23 Naohiro TAKAHARA (F, Jubilo Iwata)

MEXICO

1 Oswaldo SANCHEZ (G, Guadalajara)
2 Claudio SUAREZ (D, Tigres)
3 Joaquin BELTRAN (D, Pumas UNAM)
4 David OTEO (D, Tigres)
5 Duilio DAVINO (D, America)
6 Marco Antonio RUIZ (M, Guadalajara)
7 David RANGEL (M, Toluca)
8 Juan Pablo RODRIGUEZ (M, Atlas)
9 Jose Manuel ABUNDIS (F, Atlante)
10 Jared Santos BORGETTI (F, Laguna)
11 Daniel OSORNO (F, Atlas)
12 Erubey CABUTO (G, Atlas)
13 Pavel PARDO (D, America)
14 German VILLA (M, America)
15 Antonio DE NIGRIS (F, Monterrey)
16 Alberto COYOTE (M, Guadalajara)
17 Octavio VALDEZ (D, Pachuca)
18 Cesareo VICTORINO (M, Pachuca)
19 Joaquin REYES (M, Santos Laguna)
20 Victor RUIZ (M, Toluca)
21 Jesus ARELLANO (M, Monterrey)
22 Hugo CHAVEZ (D, Atletico Morelia)
23 Oscar DAUTT (G, Puebla)

SOUTH KOREA

1 LEE Woon-jae (G, Sangmoo)
2 KANG Chul (D, Linz ASK, Aut)
3 CHOI Sung-yong (D, Linz ASK, Aut)
4 SONG Chong-gug (D, Pusan Icons)
5 LEE Lim-saeng (D, Puchon)
6 YOO Sang-chul (M, Kashiwa Reysol, Jap)
7 KIM Tae-young (D, Chunnam Dragons)
8 YOON Jong-hwan (M, Cerezo Osaka, Jap)
9 KIM Do-hoon (F, Chonbuk Hyundai)
10 CHOI Yong-soo (F, JEF United, Jap)
11 SEOL Ki-hyeon (F, Royal Antwerp, Big)
12 KIM Yong-dae (G, Yonsei Univ)
13 SEO Deok-kyu (D, Ulsan Hyundai)
14 SEO Dong-won (M, Suwon Samsung)
15 LEE Min (D, Sung Sangmoo)
16 AN Hyo-yeon (F, Kyoto Purple Sanga, Jap)
17 HA Seok-ju (M, Pohang Steelers)
18 HWANG Sun-hong (F, Kashiwa Reysol, Jap)
19 LEE Young-pyo (M, Anyang LG)
20 HONG Myung-bo (D, Kashiwa Reysol, Jap)
21 PARK Ji-sung (M, Kyoto Purple Sanga, Jap)
22 KO Jong-su (M, Suwon Samsung)
23 CHOI Eun-sung (G, Taejon Citizen)

June 6 - Auckland - WC qual
Cook Islands 1 (Pukoku 13)
Vanuatu 8 (Ben 4, Lauru 27, G Maki 38, Iwai 50, 59, 66, P Maki 74, Waiwai 82)
HT: 1-3. **Att:** 600. **Ref:** Breeze (Aus)
Cook Islands: T Jamieson - M Jamieson, Pareanga (T Chambers 75), N Mani, Dickenson, Newnham (Temiha 62), Pukoku, D Shepherd, Nand, J Shepherd (Teiva 51), S Mani.
Vanuatu: Garae - Ben, Demas, Lauru, Bibi, Mansale (Rarai 46), Iwai, Natuoivi, G Maki, Mermer (Waiwai 72), Bruno (P Maki 56).

June 6 - Teplice - WC qual
Czech Republic 3 (Kuka 40, 88, Baros 90)
Northern Ireland 1 (Mulryne 45)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 14,050. **Ref:** Sundell (Swe)
Czech Republic: Srnicek - Tyce, Repka, Votava (Bejbl 46), Poborsky (Lokvenc 83), Nedved, Berger, Galasek, Rosicky, Koller (Baros 65), Kuka.
Northern Ireland: Taylor - Nolan, A Hughes, Williams, Murdock, Griffin, Johnson (Ferguson 77), Mulryne (Kennedy 82), Healy, M Hughes, Elliott (Quinn 66).

June 6 - Copenhagen - WC qual
Denmark 2 (E Sand 43, 83)
Malta 1 (Mallia 8)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 38,499. **Ref:** Shmolik (Bls)
Denmark: Sorensen - Tofting (Nielsen 74), Henriksen, Gravesen, Heintze, Helveg, C Jensen, Rommedahl (Gronkjaer 56), Tomasson (Nygaard 68), Jorgensen, E Sand.
Malta: Barry - Debono, Dimech, Said, Theuma, Brincat (Holland 72), Camilleri, Turner, Agius (Okoh 78), Mallia (Nwoko 65), Michael Mifsud.

June 6 - Tallinn - WC qual
Estonia 0
Rep Ireland 2 (Dunne 8, Holland 39)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 9,300. **Ref:** Salomir (Rom)
Estonia: Kaalma - Saviauk, Stepanov, Piiroja, U Rooba (Allas 69), Reim, Haavistu (Terehhov 52), Novikov (Ustritski 74), Zelinski, Kristal, Oper.
Rep Ireland: Given - Carr, Harte, Dunne, Staunton, Holland, G Kelly, Kinsella, Quinn (Doherty 36), Duff (O'Brien 89), Kilbane.

June 6 - Toftir - WC qual
Faroe Islands 0
Yugoslavia 6 (D Stankovic 18, 51, Kezman 27, 83, 90, Milosevic 64)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 4,371. **Ref:** Jara (Cze)
Faroe Islands: Mikkelsen - Benjaminsen, J B Hansen, a Borg, H F Hansen, O Hansen, Samal Joensen (R Jacobsen 87), J Johnsson (A Morkore 72), C Jacobsen (H Petersen 72), Arge, J Petersen.
Yugoslavia: Radakovic - Mirkovic (Bunjevcevic 44), Goran Djorovic, Kezman, Drulovic (Sasa Ilic - MF - 70), Dmitrovic, Lazetic (Obradovic 46), Mijatovic, Milosevic, D Stankovic, Mihajlovic.

June 6 - Athens - WC qual
Greece 0
England 2 (Scholes 64, Beckham 87)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 29,000. **Ref:** Pedersen (Nor)
Greece: Nikopolidis - Goumas, Ouzounidis, Dabizas - Mavrogenidis (Giannakopoulos 70), Basinas, Zagorakis, Fyssas - Karagounis (Limberopoulos 24) - Machlas (Alexandris 63), Vryzas.
England: Seaman - P Neville, Keown, Ferdinand, Ashley Cole - Beckham, Gerrard, Scholes (Butt 88), Heskey (McManaman 74) - Owen, Fowler (Smith 79).

June 6 - Budapest - WC qual
Hungary 4 (Matyus 40, V Sebok pen 45, A Korsos 55, 62)
Georgia 1 (Kobiashvili 77)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Strampe (Ger)
Hungary: Kiraly - G Korsos, V Sebok, Matyus - T Peto, Lisztes (Lendvai 80), Halmai (Dardai 70), Illes, A Korsos (Dombi 77) - Horvath, Kabat.
Georgia: Zoidze - Abramidze, Kaladze (Todua 67), A Arveladze, Kobiashvili - Khizanishvili, Rekviashvili, Nemsadze (Kemoklidze 67), Ketsbaia, S Arveladze - Kavelashvili (Kinkladze 53).

June 6 - Reykjavik - WC qual
Iceland 1 (Dadason 43)
Bulgaria 1 (Berbatov 81)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,316. **Ref:** Gallagher (Eng)
Iceland: Arason - A Helgason, Vidarsson, Gretarsson, Gunnarsson, R Kristinsson, Hreidarsson, E Sverrisson, E Gudjohnsen, H Sigurdsson, Dadason (H Helguson 46).
Bulgaria: Zdravkov - Markov, Chomakov (M Petrov 65), Kirilov, B Ivanov, Georgi Ivanov, Balakov (Todorov 73), Berbatov, Peev, Stoicho Stoilov, Pazin (Svetoslav Petrov 53).

June 6 - Tel Aviv - WC qual
Israel 1 (Revivo 4)
Spain 1 (Raul 63)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Frisk (Swe)
Israel: Davidovich (Awat 46) - Brumer, Talker, Benado, Gershon, Keissi, Zeituni, Revivo (Banin 70), Nimni, Berkovic (Benayoun 87), Tal.
Spain: Canizares - Manuel Pablo, Sergi, Guardiola (Diego Tristan 60), Nadal, Hierro, Raul, Luis Enrique (Puyol 83), Javi Moreno, Baraja, Valeron (Ivan Helguera 76).

June 6 - Riga - WC qual
Latvia 0
Croatia 1 (Balaban 39)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** McDermott (Ire)
Latvia: Kolinko - Stepanovs, Astafjevs (Miholaps 70), Zemlinskis, Laizans, Blagonadezdins, Zakresevskis, Bleidelis (Dobrecovs 87), Isakovs, Rubins (Verpakovskis 61), Stolcers. *Sent off: Stolcers 73min.*
Croatia: Pletikosa - Saric, Jarni, Tomas, Tudor, D Simic, Rapajic (Vugrinec 74), Prosinecki, Suker, N Kovac (Agic 89), Balaban (Vlaovic 64).

UNCAF CUP

Group A

May 23 - Puerto Cortes, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
El Salvador 3 (Rodriguez 1, pen 36, F Gonzalez 2)
Nicaragua 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Ramirez (Gtm)
El Salvador: Gomez - Osorio, V Velasquez, Cubias, Canjura, Cabrera (Alvarez 62), Corrales, Barrientos (Garcia 73), Rodriguez, F Gonzalez (Ramirez 63), E Martinez.
Nicaragua: Sujo - Alonso, D Solorzano, Martinez (Wilson 56), Bermudez (Castellon 79), Palacios, West, Calero, Sanchez (Webster 25), Morales, Balladares.

May 23 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Honduras 1 (Nunez 45)
Panama 2 (Jorge Dely Valdes 36, Julio Dely Valdes 67)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Hall (USA)
Honduras: H Caballero - Guerrero (Fernandez 72), Morales, Izaguirre, Lopez, Sabillon (Alvarez 61), Hernandez (Martinez 41), C Pavon, Nunez, Mejia, Turcios.
Panama: James - Moreno (Baloy 22), A Torres, Rodriguez, Jorge Dely Valdes, Julio Dely Valdes (Brown 76), Diaz (Blanco 61), Walter, Mendez, Guardia, Cubillas.

May 25 - Tegucigalpa, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
El Salvador 2 (Corrales 14, Canjura 83)
Panama 1 (Jorge Dely Valdes 90)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Mattus (CR)
El Salvador: Gomez - Osorio, V Velasquez, Cubias, Canjura, Corrales (Cabrera 83), Barrientos, Rodriguez, F Gonzalez (Ramirez 79), E Martinez, Garcia. *Sent off: V Velasquez 83min.*
Panama: Gonzalez - A Torres, Baloy (Anderson 67), Rodriguez (Perez 79), Jorge Dely Valdes, Blanco, Julio Dely Valdes, Correa, Walter, Guardia, Cubillas.

May 25 - Tegucigalpa, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Honduras 10 (Guerrero 22, C Pavon 24, 33, 82, Rosales 39, D Solorzano og 55, Nunez 73, 81, Martinez 78, 79)
Nicaragua 2 (Webster 13, Bermudez 86)
HT: 4-1. **Ref:** Arredondo (Mex)
Honduras: J Morales - Guerrero, R Morales, Izaguirre, Rosales, C Pavon, Alvarez, Nunez, Mejia, Fernandez, Turcios.
Nicaragua: Sujo - Alonso, D Solorzano, Bermudez, Palacios, West, Calero, Webster, Morales, Balladares, Wilson. *Sent off: Wilson 60min.*

May 27 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Honduras 1 (Turcios 41)
El Salvador 1 (Umanzor 90)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Hall (USA)
Honduras: H Caballero - Guerrero, R Morales, Izaguirre, Rosales, C Pavon, Alvarez, Nunez, Mejia, Fernandez, Turcios (Maradiaga 70).
El Salvador: Gomez - Osorio, Benitez (Cabrera 72), Cubias (Umanzor 51), Canjura, Corrales, Barrientos, Rodriguez, F Gonzalez (Ramirez 68), E Martinez, Garcia.

May 27 - Puerto Cortes, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Panama 6 (Jorge Dely Valdes 27, 30, 69, Cubillas 40, Julio Dely Valdes 53, Anderson 80)
Nicaragua 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Ramirez (Gtm)
Panama: James - Moreno (Diaz 67), A Torres, Rodriguez, Jorge Dely Valdes (Brown 74), Julio Dely Valdes, Walter, Anderson, Mendez (Perez 78), Guardia, Cubillas.
Nicaragua: Mendieta - Alonso, D Solorzano, Martinez (Molina 33), Bermudez, Palacios, West, Calero (Sujo 69), Webster, Morales, Balladares (J Solorzano 40). *Sent off: Mendieta 68min.*

UNCAF CUP – GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
El Salvador*	3	2	1	0	6	2	7
Panama*	3	2	0	1	9	3	6
Honduras	3	1	1	1	12	5	4
Nicaragua	3	0	0	3	2	19	0

**Qualified for final group*

Group B

May 23 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Costa Rica 4 (Fonseca pen 28, 37, 85, Marin 58)
Belize 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Alfaro (ElS)
Costa Rica: Gonzalez - Marin, G Martinez (Brenes 72), Arias, Fonseca, Solis, Diaz (L Martinez 65), Soto (W Castro 65), A Castro, Centeno, Berry.
Belize: Slusher - Moss, Symms, O Lyons, Nolberto, Leslie, Nunez, Fraser (Garcia 63), Thomas (Celiz 34), Reid, Pelayo (Zuniga 46).

May 25 - Puerto Cortes, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Guatemala 3 (Chen 23, Garcia 25, pen 85)
Belize 3 (Fraser 33, 43, Leslie 58)
HT: 2-2. **Ref:** Bardales (Hnd)
Guatemala: Hurtarte - Chen, Miranda, Jimenez, Acevedo, Garcia, Ponciano (Swisher 46), Trujillo (Rojas 46), Donis, Pezzarossi, Perez (W Estrada 70).
Belize: Slusher - Moss, Symms, R Rodriguez (O Lyons 76), Nolberto, Leslie, Garcia (Reid 65), Nunez, Celiz, Zuniga (Fraser 25), Thomas. *Sent off: Celiz 86min.*

May 27 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Costa Rica 1 (Nunez 45)
Guatemala 1 (Acevedo 70)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Arredondo (Mex)
Costa Rica: Morgan - Arias, Fonseca (Centeno 72), Solis, Diaz, Soto (L Martinez 63), Gomez, A Castro (Nunez 35), Brenes, Berry, W Castro.
Guatemala: Ortiz - Chen, Miranda, Swisher, Cabrera (Donis 36), Rojas, Acevedo, Garcia (W Estrada 66), Cocherari, Pezzarossi (Ponciano 46), Perez. *Sent off: Miranda 88min.*

UNCAF CUP – GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Costa Rica*	2	1	1	0	5	1	4
Guatemala*	2	0	2	0	4	4	2
Belize	2	0	1	1	3	7	1

**Qualified for final group*

Final group

May 30 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
El Salvador 0
Guatemala 0
Ref: Hall (USA)
El Salvador: Gomez - Benitez (Cabrera 60), V Velasquez, Cubias (Umanzor 65), Canjura, Corrales (Ramirez 55), Barrientos, Rodriguez, F Gonzalez, E Martinez, Garcia.
Guatemala: Ortiz - Chen, Swisher, Jimenez, Acevedo (Pedroza 82), Garcia, Ponciano (W Estrada 54), Cocherari (Thompson 46), Donis, Pezzarossi, Perez.

May 30 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Panama 1 (Julio Dely Valdes 47)
Costa Rica 2 (Gomez 43, Centeno 85)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Arredondo (Mex)
Panama: James - Moreno (Diaz 44), A Torres, Rodriguez (Brown 87), Jorge Dely Valdes, Julio Dely Valdes, Walter, Anderson (Blanco 66), Mendez, Guardia, Cubillas.
Costa Rica: Lonnis - Marin, G Martinez, Arias, Fonseca (Diaz 72), Solis, Soto (L Martinez 80), Gomez, Nunez (A Castro 58), Centeno, Berry. *Sent off: Gomez 88min.*

June 1 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
El Salvador 1 (Ramirez 13)
Panama 1 (Anderson 81)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Arredondo (Mex)
El Salvador: Gomez - Osorio, V Velasquez, Cabrera (Canjura 78), Ramirez (Corrales 76), Umanzor (Cubias 83), Barrientos, Galdamez, Rodriguez, E Martinez, Garcia.
Panama: Gonzalez - A Torres, Rodriguez (Blanco 64), Jorge Dely Valdes, Julio Dely Valdes, Correa (Diaz 51), Walter (Perez 76), Anderson, Mendez, Guardia, Paschal. *Sent off: Mendez 85min.*

June 1 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Guatemala 2 (Pezzarossi 2, W Estrada 51)
Costa Rica 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Bardales (Hnd)
Guatemala: Ortiz - Chen, Swisher, Jimenez, Acevedo (Pedroza 79), Garcia, Cocherari, Donis, Pezzarossi (Thompson 46), W Estrada (Albizuris 75), Perez. *Sent off: Cocherari 26min.*
Costa Rica: Gonzalez - Marin, G Martinez (W Castro 51), Arias, Fonseca, Solis, Diaz (L Martinez 37), Soto, Nunez (A Castro 28), Centeno, Berry.

June 3 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
El Salvador 1 (Galdamez 40)
Costa Rica 1 (Centeno 55)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 396. **Ref:** Arredondo (Mex)
El Salvador: Gomez - Osorio, V Velasquez, Canjura (Cabrera 67), Ramirez (Benitez 75), Alvarez (Barrientos 57), Umanzor, Galdamez, Rodriguez, E Martinez, Garcia. *Sent off: Osorio 60min.*
Costa Rica: Morgan - Marin, Arias, Fonseca, Solis, Gomez, A Castro, Nunez (L Martinez 56), Centeno, Brenes (W Castro 76), Berry. *Sent off: Marin 84min.*

June 3 - San Pedro Sula, Honduras - UNCAF Cup
Guatemala 3 (Pezzarossi 15, Acevedo 33, Garcia 89)
Panama 1 (Jorge Dely Valdes 67)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 396. **Ref:** Hall (USA)
Guatemala: Ortiz - Chen, Swisher, Jimenez, Acevedo (Albizuris 63), Garcia, Thompson, Donis, Pezzarossi (Ponciano 56), W Estrada (Pedroza 72), Perez.
Panama: Gonzalez - Moreno (Diaz 49), A Torres, Baloy, Rodriguez, Jorge Dely Valdes, Julio Dely Valdes, Perez (Blanco 53), Anderson (Brown 63), Guardia, Cubillas.

UNCAF CUP – FINAL GROUP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guatemala	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
Costa Rica	3	1	1	1	3	4	4
El Salvador	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
Panama	3	0	1	2	3	6	1

Top three qualify automatically for 2002 Gold Cup; Panama play-off for a finals berth

WORLDSERVICE

June 6 - Kaunas - WC qual
Lithuania 1 (Fomenka 87)
Romania 2 (Ilie 31, Moldovan 49)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 7,000. **Ref:** Stredak (Slk)
Lithuania: Stauce - Zvirgzdauskas, Dedura, Skarbalius, Graziunas, Morinas (Fomenka 46), R Zutautas, Mikalajunas, Semberas, Razanauskas (Buitkus 73), Poskus.
Romania: Stelea - Contra (Ganea 54), Radoi, Filipescu, Chivu, Dumitru, Niculae, D Munteanu, Moldovan (Prodan 57), Codrea, Ilie (Mutu 63).

June 6 - Luxembourg - WC qual
Luxembourg 1 (Schneider 48)
Russia 2 (Alenichev 16, Semak 76)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 2,200. **Ref:** Skjervold (Nor)
Luxembourg: Gillet - Schauls, L Deville, Theis, Strasser, Salbene, Peters (Reiter 89), Holtz, Huss (Christophe 64), Cardoni, Schneider (Braun 83).
Russia: Nigmatullin - Khokhlov, Nikiforov, Smertin (Popov 52), Alenichev (Semak 61), Kovtun, Onopko, Karpin, Titov, Mostovoi, Beschastnykh (Fedkov 66).

June 6 - Oslo - WC qual
Norway 1 (Carew 80)
Belarus 1 (Bialkevich 23)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 17,164. **Ref:** Radoman (Yug)
Norway: Myhre - Basma (Aas 90), Hoftun, H Berg, Riseth, Strand (Nevland 69), Carew, Leonhardsen, E Bakke (Rudi 69), Andersen, F Johnsen.
Belarus: Tumilovich - Yakhimovich, Ostrovsky (Tarlovsky 85), Lukhvich, Shtanyuk, Gurenko, Khatskevich, Bialkevich, Shuneiko, Vasilyuk (Khomutovsky 81), Milevsky (Yaskovich 50). *Sent off: Tumilovich 81min.*

June 6 - Lisbon - WC qual
Portugal 6 (Pauleta 36, 71, Pedro Barbosa 55, 59, Joao Pinto 76, 81)
Cyprus 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Farina (Ita)
Portugal: Ricardo - Rui Jorge, Frechaut, Jorge Costa (Nuno Gomes 82), Beto, Petit (Paulo Bento 87), Pedro Barbosa (Sa Pinto 72), Rui Costa, Joao Pinto, Capucho, Pauleta.
Cyprus: Morphis - Theodotou, Philippou, M Charalambous, Ioakim, Satsias, Engomitis (Yiasoumi 69), Okkas (Stavrou 83), Christodoulou (Melanarkitis 61), Germanou, M Constantinou.

June 6 - Serravalle - WC qual
San Marino 1 (A Selva 11)
Belgium 4 (Wilmots 10, pen 89, Verheyen 60, Sonck 68)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 1,000. **Ref:** Yakov (Isr)
San Marino: F Gasperoni - Albani (R Selva 69), Della Balda, S Bacciocchi - Marani, Gennari, Muccioli, Vannucci, Zonzini (Ugolini 82) - A Selva, B Gasperoni (Bugli 74).
Belgium: De Vlieger - Deflandre, Valgaeren, Van Meir, Van Kerckhoven (Boffin 79) - Vanderhaeghe, Goor (Vermant 75), Walem, Verheyen - B Peeters (Sonck 52), Wilmots.

June 6 - Gothenburg - WC qual
Sweden 6 (Larsson pen 38, 58, pen 68, pen 79, Alexandersson 74, D Andersson 77)
Moldova 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,233. **Ref:** Dunn (Eng)
Sweden: Hedman - Mellberg, P Andersson, Saarenpaa (C Andersson 34), Lucic, Linderoth, Alexandersson, Magnus Svensson (Mathias Svensson 83), A Svensson (D Andersson 71), Allback, Larsson.
Moldova: Romanenco - Covalenco, Rebeja (Osipenco 63), Testemitanu, Catinsus, Stroenco, Epureanu, Oprea, Pogreban (Barburos 46), Gaidamasciuc, Clescenco (Sischin 78). *Sent off: Covalenco 37min.*

June 6 - Basle - WC qual
Switzerland 0
Slovenia 1 (Cimerotic 83)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 26,000. **Ref:** Granat (Pol)
Switzerland: Pascolo - Zellweger, Quentin, Henchoz, P Muller, Vogel, N'Kufo, Wicky (Lonfat 66), Lombardo (Sforza 56), Fournier, Frei (Sesa 79).
Slovenia: Simeunovic - Milinovic, Karic (Cimerotic 32), Galic, Knavs, Novak, Ceh, Osterc (Acimovic 46), Zahovic, Pavlin, Rudonja.

June 6 - Auckland - WC qual
Tahiti 0
New Zealand 5 (Coveny 41, 56, 71, Lines 53, Perry 88)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 2,052. **Ref:** Irvine (NI)
Tahiti: Tahutini - Fatupua, Atger, Paama (Maurirere 64), Boene, Garcia, Zaveroni, Amaru (Tauihara 83), Bennett, Auraa, Senechal (Tagawa 33).
New Zealand: Batty (Nicholson 46) - Zoricich, Perry, Burton (Atkinson 46), Lines, Jackson, Elliott, Nelsen, Vicelich, Coveny, Davis (Campbell 67).

June 6 - Bursa - WC qual
Turkey 3 (Alpay 43, 58, 70)
Macedonia 3 (Sakiri 7, Serafimovski 20, Nikolovski 62)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Rodomonti (Ita)
Turkey: Rustu - Umit Davala, Bulent, Tayfun (Fatih Akyel 84), Alpay, Abdullah, Okan (Basturk 69), Tugay, Hakan Sukur, Emre, Oktay (Hasan Ozer 46).
Macedonia: Filevski - Stravreski, Stojanov, Guzelov, Nikolovski, Mitrevski, Serafimovski (Trajanov 72), M Krstev, Nacevski (Lazarevski 48), Sakiri, Beciri (Pandev 66). *Sent off: M Krstev 48min.*

June 6 - Kyiv - WC qual
Ukraine 1 (Zubov 44)
Wales 1 (Pembridge 80)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 33,000. **Ref:** Gomes (Por)
Ukraine: Shovkovskyi (Levytskyi 90) - Starostyak (Luzhnyi 46), Parfyonov, Holovko, Vaschuk, Dmytrulin (Nesmachny 46), Shevchenko, Tymoshchuk, Zubov, Vorobei, Rebrov.
Wales: P Jones - Delaney (Jenkins 37), Barnard, Melville, Page, Pembridge, Davies, Blake (Koumas 78), Hartson, Speed, Giggs.

Thursday, June 7

June 7 - Columbus, Ohio - friendly
United States 0
Ecuador 0
Att: 12,572. **Ref:** Farias (Can)
USA: Friedel - Berhalter (Mastroeni 46), Fraser, Petke, Lewis, Reyna, O'Brien, Sanneh (Enouchs 62; Williams 90), Cherundolo (Thorrington 71), Moore, Kirovski.
Ecuador: Ibarra - I Hurtado, U De la Cruz, Guerron, Aguinaga, W Sanchez (Ayovi 63), Chala, Espinosa, E Mendez, Tenorio, A Delgado.

Friday, June 8

June 8 - Auckland - WC qual
New Zealand 2 (Hickey 64, 66)
Cook Islands 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 500. **Ref:** Hugo (Aus)
New Zealand: Bannatyne - Tayler, Douglas, Hickey, Urlovic (Lines 46), Jackson, Atkinson, Ngata (Elliott 46), Campbell (Nelsen 65), Smith, Davis.
Cook Islands: T Jamieson - M Jamieson, Pareanga, N Mani, Dickenson, Teiva, J Chambers, Pukoku, D Shepherd, Nand (S Mani 35), Temiha.

June 8 - Auckland - WC qual
Vanuatu 2 (Iwai 9, 90)
Solomon Islands 7 (Wickham 17, 47, Menapi 46, 71, Walta 48, Samani 62, Suri 79)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 1,674. **Ref:** Lennie (Aus)
Vanuatu: Chilia (Garae 46) - Ben, Demas, Lauru (Bruno 46), Bibi, Iwai, Rarai, Poida (Vava 68), Natuoivi, G Maki, Mermer.
Solomon Islands: Aefi - Wickham, S Daudau, Samani, Wasi (Kaierea 46), Menapi, Walta, Suri, P Daudau (Toata 64), Omokirio, Koto (Firisua 76).

Sunday, June 10

June 10 - Luanda - Cosafa Cup quarter-final
Angola 1 (Quinzinho 12)
Mauritius 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Ngwenya (SAf)
Angola: Goliath - Filipe, Juliao, Antonio Neto, Didi, Renato, Stopirra (Bernardo 76), Joni, Paulao (Zico 43), Flavio (Johnson 66), Quinzinho.
Mauritius: Doro - Adelaide (Edouard 70), Speville, Mourgine, Punchoo, Bayaram, Edmond (Naboth 46), Cundasami, Louis, Appou (Badul 87), Perle.

June 10 - Kingston - friendly
Jamaica 4 (Lowe 19, pen 85, Gardner 32, A Williams 38)
Cuba 1 (Gonzalez 60)
HT: 3-0
Jamaica: Ricketts - Marshall, Goodison (McDonald 82), Sinclair, Gardner, Simpson (Taylor 66), Lawrence (Dawes 46), Whitmore, A Williams (Hyde 59), Hayles (Fuller 46), Lowe (Scarlett 88).
Cuba: Moralez - D Perez, Dalis, Urrutia, Molina, Alvarez, Betancourt, Gonzalez, Mendive, Cepero (Martinez 46), A Perez.

June 10 - Kasarani - friendly
Kenya 1 (Sirengo 30)
Egypt 1 (Ahmed Salah Hossam 58)
HT: 1-0

June 10 - La Chorrera - friendly
Panama 0
Trinidad & Tobago 0

Monday, June 11

June 11 - Auckland - WC qual
Cook Islands 0
Tahiti 6 (Senechal 2, 45, Tagawa 19, 64, 88, Bennett 51)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 300. **Ref:** Lennie (Aus)
Cook Islands: T Jamieson - T Chambers, M Jamieson, Pareanga (Enjoy 85), N Mani, Teiva (Nand 66), J Chambers, Pukoku, D Shepherd, Temiha, S Mani (J Shepherd 66).
Tahiti: Tien Wah - Fatupua, Atger (Tchen 55), Boene, Garcia, Zaveroni, Tagawa, Bennett, Maurirere, Auraa (Tetuanui 61), Senechal (Amaru 72).

June 11 - Auckland - WC qual
Solomon Islands 1 (Suri 85)
New Zealand 5 (Coveny 27, 50, Jackson 32, 55, Urlovic 67)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 2,500. **Ref:** Shah (Fij)
Solomon Islands: Aefi - Kaierea, S Daudau, Samani, Wasi (Wickham 67), Menapi, Walta (Allen 46), Suri, P Daudau, Omokirio, Koto (Konofilla 67).
New Zealand: Nicholson - Zoricich, Perry, Burton (Hickey 56), Lines (Urlovic 64), Jackson, Elliott, Atkinson, Nelsen, Vicelich, Coveny (Smith 76).

Wednesday, June 13

June 13 - Auckland - WC qual
New Zealand 7 (Coveny 2, 7, 29, Jackson 24, Lines 27, Burton 61, Vicelich 67)
Vanuatu 0
HT: 5-0. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Irvine (NI)
New Zealand: Nicholson - Zoricich, Perry, Burton, Lines (Ngata 81), Jackson, Elliott, Atkinson, Nelson (Douglas 74), Vicelich, Coveny (Urlovic 75).
Vanuatu: Garae - Ben (Vava 83), Demas, Lauru, Bibi, Rarai, Poida, G Maki, Mermer, P Maki (Walwai 54), Reuben (Mansale 10).

June 13 - Auckland - WC qual
Tahiti 2 (Garcia pen 26, Fatupua 77)
Solomon Islands 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 250. **Ref:** Breeze (Aus)
Tahiti: Tahutini - Fatupua, Atger, Boene, Garcia, Zaveroni (Paama 62), Amaru (Tetuanui 75), Bennett, Maurirere, Auraa, Senechal (Tagawa 46). *Sent off: Atger 63min.*
Solomon Islands: Aefi - Edwin, Molea, Wickham, Samani (Toata 73), Wasi, Menapi (Allen 68), Suri, P Daudau, Omokirio, Koto (Firisua 86). *Sent off: Edwin 27min.*

Saturday, June 16

June 16 - Kingston - WC qual
Jamaica 0
United States 0
Att: 35,000. **Ref:** Aquino (Par)
Jamaica: Ricketts - Goodison, Sinclair, Gardner, Marshall, Whitmore, A Williams, J Lawrence, Dawes (Hyde 83), Lowe, Harris (Fuller 71).
USA: Keller - Regis, Agoos, Llamosa, Cherundolo, Sanneh (Razov 78), Armas, Reyna, Stewart, McBride (O'Brien 69), Moore (Kirovski 58).

June 16 - Antananarivo - AfNC qual
Madagascar 0
Zambia 1 (Lungu 13)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 25,000

June 16 - Belle Vue - AfNC qual
Mauritius 0
Liberia 2 (Tondo 1, 61)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 78

June 16 - Mexico City - WC qual
Mexico 1 (Abundis 7)
Costa Rica 2 (Fonseca 73, Medford 87)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 60,000
Mexico: O Sanchez - Pardo, D Davino, Suarez, Carmona - Zepeda (Victorino 52), Del Olmo (Palencia 75), V Ruiz, M A Ruiz - Hernandez, Abundis (Osorno 68).
Costa Rica: Lonnis - G Martinez, Marin, J Drummond - Parks, Solis, Bryce, C Castro (Sunsing 59), R Cordero (Fonseca 40) - Lopez, Wanchope (Medford 81).

June 16 - Fez - AfNC qual
Morocco 0
Gabon 1 (Nguema 43)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,000

June 16 - Windhoek - AfNC qual
Namibia 0
Nigeria 2 (Ayegbeni 89, Shaibu 90)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000

June 16 - Port-of-Spain - WC qual
Trinidad & Tobago 2 (Latapy 56, S John 90)
Honduras 4 (C Pavon pen 13, Turcios 20, Morales 54, Guevera pen 86)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 5,500. **Ref:** Navarro (Can)
Trinidad & Tobago: Ince - M Andrews, Elcock, Lawrence, Rougier (Saunders 46), Rahim, Carrington (Latapy 52), Trotman (Edwards 67), Dwarika, Yorke, S John.
Honduras: Valladares - Turcios (Leon 89), Reyes, Medina, Clavasquin (R Morales 46), Guerrero, Guevera, S Caballero, Jose Pineda, D Suazo, C Pavon (Nunez 64).

Sunday, June 17

June 17 - Cabinda - AfNC qual
Angola 2 (Paulao 25, Flavio 52)
Burundi 1 (Selemane 50)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000

June 17 - Ouagadougou - AfNC qual
Burkina Faso 1 (Traore 3)
Algeria 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,000

June 17 - Kinshasa - AfNC qual
DR Congo 2 (Bafwafwa 54, Molakay Seoul 55)
Zimbabwe 1 (Mwaruwari 7)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 40,000

June 17 - Kumasi - AfNC qual
Ghana 3 (Appiah 25, Gyan 31, Amoah 37)
Lesotho 1 (Teela 63)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 30,000

June 17 - Abidjan - AfNC qual
Ivory Coast 2 (Bakayoko pen 70, N El Sayed og 83)
Egypt 2 (Salah 56, I Said 84)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 6,000

June 17 - Durban - AfNC qual
South Africa 0
Congo 0
Att: 45,000. **Ref:** Mukuna (Zim)
South Africa: Arendse - Booth, Rabutla, F McCarthy, Mnguni, Mokoena (Raselemane 62), Sheppard, Buckley, Zuma, Nomvete (Ngake 78), Ndlanya (Nhleko 46).
Congo: O Itoua - Endzongo, Tchimbakala, Allelone, Ngandziami (Mbama 86), Makita, Bakouma, Ndzi, Nkeoua, Vieria, Mavoungou (Lolo 68).

June 17 - Khartoum - AfNC qual
Sudan 1 (Gildo 45)
Libya 0
HT: 1-0

June 17 - Lome - AfNC qual
Togo 1 ((Nousoudjin 32)
Senegal 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000

June 17 - Tunis - AfNC qual
Tunisia 4 (Zitouni 33, 62, Jaziri 42, 44)
Kenya 1 (Simon 61)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 20,000

Wednesday, June 20

June 20 - San Jose - WC qual
Costa Rica 2 (Marin 4, Wanchope 38)
Jamaica 1 (Lowe 10)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 17,800. **Ref:** Toro Rendon (Col)
Costa Rica: Lonnis - Marin, G Martinez, Parks, J Drummond, C Castro, Solis, Lopez, Fonseca (R Cordero 75), Wanchope, Medford (Sunsing 60; Bryce 84).
Jamaica: Ricketts (A Lawrence 39) - Goodison, Sinclair, Simpson, Marshall, Whitmore, A Williams (Hyde 75), J Lawrence, Dawes, Lowe, Burton (Fuller 62).

June 20 - San Pedro Sula - WC qual
Honduras 3 (C Pavon 32, 55, pen 64)
Mexico 1 (V Ruiz 86)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Elizondo (Arg)
Honduras: Valladares - S Caballero, Reyes, Clavasquin - Turcios (Leon 76), Guerrero, Jose Pineda, Guevera (M Suazo 84), Medina - D Suazo, C Pavon (Nunez 75).
Mexico: Campos - Carmona, Suarez, Marquez, D Davino - Pardo, Torrado (Zepeda 52), Valdez (Abundis 46), M A Ruiz - Hernandez (V Ruiz 72), Borgetti.

June 20 - Wellington - WC qual
New Zealand 0
Australia 2 (Emerton 5, 82)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 19,500. **Ref:** Okada (Jap)
New Zealand: Batty - Zoricich, Nelsen, Vicelich, Perry (Davis 70), Elliott, Burton, Jackson, Lines (Hickey 46), Killen, Coveny.
Australia: Schwarzer - Murphy, Muscat, Popovic, T Vidmar, Corica (Zdrilic 46), Emerton, Lazaridis (Tiatto 66), Okon, Skoko, Zane (Aloisi 75). *Sent off: Tiatto 84min.*

June 20 - Foxboro - WC qual
United States 2 (Razov 2, Stewart 20)
Trinidad & Tobago 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 31,211. **Ref:** Bujsaim (UAE)
USA: Keller - Cherundolo, Regis, Stewart, Reyna, Razov (Moore 70; O'Brien 89), Agoos, Armas, Kirovski, Sanneh, Pope.
Trinidad & Tobago: Ince - Saunders, M Andrews, Carrington (A John 46), Eve, Latapy, Rahim (Dwarika 55), Elcock, S John (Trotman 74), Lawrence, Yorke.

Sunday, June 24

June 24 - Sydney - WC qual
Australia 4 (Zdrilic 6, 83, Emerton 36, Aloisi 57)
New Zealand 1 (Coveny pen 42)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 42,000. **Ref:** Jong (SKo)
Australia 6-1 on agg
Australia: Schwarzer - Muscat, Moore, Okon (Horvat 60), T Vidmar, Popovic (Murphy 36), Skoko (Bresciano 60), Lazaridis, Aloisi, Emerton, Zdrilic.
New Zealand: Batty - Zoricich, Perry (Davis 79), Hickey, Jackson, Elliott, Atkinson (Urlovic 46), Nelsen, Vicelich, Coveny, Killen.

EUROPE

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

1st qualifying rnd draw

Levski Sofia (Bul) v Zeljeznicar (Bos) (match 1)
Linfield (NI) v Torpedo Kutaisi (Geo) (2)
KR Reykjavik (Ice) v Vllaznia Shkoder (Alb) (3)
Sloga Jugomagnat (Mac) v Kaunas (Lit) (4)
VB Vagur (Far) v Slavia Mozyr (Bls) (5)
Bohemians (Ire) v Levadia Maardu (Est) (6)
Barry Town (Wal) v Shamkir (Aze) (7)
Valletta (Mlt) v FC Haka (Fin) (8)
F91 Dudelange (Lux) v Skonto Riga (Lat) (9)
Araks Ararat (Arm) v Serif Tiraspol (Mol) (10)
1st legs, July 11; 2nd legs, July 18

2nd qualifying rnd draw

Anderlecht (Blg) v winners match 10
Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) v Lugano (Swi)
Ferencvaros (Hun) v Hajduk Split (Cro)
Winners match 6 v Halmstads (Swe)
Winners match 2 v FC Copenhagen (Den)
Omonia Nicosia (Cyp) v Red Star Belgrade (Yug)
Winners match 8 v Maccabi Haifa (Isr)
Winners match 1 v Brann Bergen (Nor)
Galatasaray (Tur) v Winners match 3
FC Porto (Por) v Winners match 7
Steaua Bucharest (Rom) v Winners match 4
Winners match 9 v Wisla Krakow (Pol)
Winners match 5 v Inter Bratislava (Slk)
Maribor (Sln) v Rangers (Sco)
1st legs, July 25; 2nd legs, Aug 1

UEFA CUP

Qualifying rnd draw

Cosmos (SaM) v Rapid Wien (Aut)
Pelister (Mac) v St Gallen (Swi)
Dinamo Bucharest (Rom) v Dinamo Tirana (Alb)
Olimpija Ljubljana (Sln) v Shafa Baku (Aze)
Midtjylland (Den) v Glentoran (NI)
Trans Narva (Est) v Elfsborg (Swe)
Club Brugge (Blg) v IA Akranes (Ice)
Gl Gotu (Far) v Obilic Belgrade (Yug)
Brasov (Rom) v Mika Ashtarak (Arm)
Viking (Nor) v Brotnjo (Bos)
CSKA Kyiv (Ukr) v Jokerit (Fin)
Vardar Skopje (Mac) v Standard Liege (Blg)
HJK Helsinki (Fin) v Ventspils (Lat)
Cwmbran Town (Wal) v Slovan Bratislava (Slk)
Maritimo (Por) v Sarajevo (Bos)
Pogon Szczecin (Pol) v Fylkir (Ice)
Dinamo Zagreb (Cro) v Flora Tallinn (Est)
Glenavon (NI) v Kilmarnock (Sco)
AEL Limassol (Cyp) v SK Tirana (Alb)
Hapoel Tel Aviv (Isr) v Ararat Yerevan (Arm)
Etzella Ettelbruck (Lux) v Legia Warsaw (Pol)
Zimbru Chisniau (Mol) v Gaziantepspor (Tur)
Dinaburg (Lat) v Osijek (Cro)
Neftchi Baku (Aze) v HIT Gorica (Sln)
HB Torshavn (Far) v Grazer AK (Aut)
Atlantas (Lit) v Rapid Bucharest (Rom)
Matador Puchov (Slk) v Sliema Wanderers (Mlt)
Longford Town (Ire) v Lovech (Bul)
Brondby (Den) v Shelbourne (Ire)
Santa Coloma (And) v Partizan Belgrade (Yug)
Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr) v Zalgiris Vilnius (Lit)
Shakhtyor Soligorsk (Bls) v CSKA Sofia (Bul)
MyPa (Fin) v Helsingborgs (Swe)
Dinamo Tbilisi (Geo) v BATE Borisov (Bls)
Debrecen (Hun) v Nistru Otaci (Mol)
Polonia Warsaw (Pol) v Total Network Solutions (Wal)
Lokomotiv Tbilisi (Geo) v Birkirkara (Mlt)
Grevenmacher (Lux) v AEK Athens (Gre)
Ruzomberok (Slk) v Belshina Bobruisk (Bls)
Olympiakos Nicosia (Cyp) v Dunaferr (Hun)
Vaduz (Lie) v Varteks (Cro)
1st legs, Aug 9; 2nd legs, Aug 23

AZERBAIJAN

CUP FINAL

May 25 - Sumgait
Shafa 2 (R Mamedov 8, Imamaliyev 85)
Neftchi 1 (Aliyev 23)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 500

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zeljeznicar	42	28	7	7	113	38	91
Brotnjo	42	26	6	10	82	25	84
Sarajevo	42	24	9	9	81	35	81
Celik	42	21	10	11	75	40	73
Velez	42	22	3	17	87	54	69
Jedinstvo (Bihac)	42	20	8	14	67	40	68
Siroki Brijeg	42	18	11	13	72	43	65
Posusje	42	20	5	17	59	43	65
Iskra	42	17	14	11	55	49	65
Troglav	42	19	8	15	59	57	65
Sloboda (Tuzla)	42	17	13	12	50	41	64
Orasje	42	19	6	17	66	54	63
Zrinjski	42	19	6	17	65	54	63
Olimpik	42	18	8	16	61	47	62
Travnik	42	18	7	17	65	72	61
Buducnost	42	17	7	18	68	63	58
Kiseljak	42	18	4	20	59	65	58
Rudar (Kakanj)	42	17	5	20	72	62	56
Capljina	42	15	6	21	53	71	51
Ljubuski	42	8	5	29	39	86	29
Krajina	42	3	5	34	23	148	14
Djerzelez Zenica	42	1	1	40	10	194	4

BOSNIAN CUP – FINAL

June 15 - Kosevo Olympic stadium, Sarajevo
Zeljeznicar 3 (Adzem 43, Alihodzic 59, Muharemovic 78)
Sarajevo 2 (Repuh 19, Saranovic 50)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 25,000

BULGARIA

May 27: Lovech 4 Beroe 0; Chemo More 1 Slavia 0; Botev 2 Chernomorets 1; Neftohimik 5 Hebar 0; Lok Sofia 3 Spartak Varna 0; CSKA 3 Minjor 0; Velbazhd 2 Lev Sofia 1.

BULGARIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lev Sofia	26	22	3	1	63	13	69
CSKA	26	19	5	2	65	16	62
Velbazhd	26	18	3	5	48	29	57
Lovech	26	17	4	5	70	23	55
Neftohimik	26	12	6	8	47	34	42
Slavia	26	10	5	11	35	35	35
Spartak Varna	26	10	4	12	38	40	34
Lok Sofia	26	9	6	11	37	37	33
Hebar	26	7	5	14	39	55	26
Chemo More	26	7	5	14	20	49	26
Chernomorets	26	6	4	16	22	48	22
Beroe	26	6	4	16	21	47	22
Botev	26	6	2	18	28	55	20
Minjor	26	3	4	19	19	71	13

CZECH REPUBLIC

May 25: Chmel Blsany 3 Teplice 1; Sparta 0 Olomouc 1; Ostrava 0 Pribram 1; Liberec 0 Brno 0; Bohemians 1 Zizkov 0; Plzen 2 Jablonec 1; Synot 2 Ceske Budejovice 0; Drnovice 1 Slavia 2.

CZECH REPUBLIC – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sparta	30	21	5	4	71	31	68
Slavia	30	14	10	6	46	32	52
Olomouc	30	14	10	6	47	33	52
Pribram	30	14	9	7	41	26	51
Zizkov	30	12	10	8	45	41	46
Liberec	30	12	9	9	39	31	45
Drnovice	30	11	8	11	35	36	41
Bohemians	30	10	10	10	33	34	40
Teplice	30	12	4	14	45	39	40
Chmel Blsany	30	10	10	10	35	35	40
Synot	30	9	10	11	37	35	37
Jablonec	30	8	8	14	26	40	32
Brno	30	7	9	14	24	35	30
Ostrava	30	7	9	14	28	45	30
Ceske Budejovice	30	6	8	16	32	56	26
Plzen	30	4	9	17	30	65	21

CZECH CUP – FINAL

May 28 - Prague
Zizkov 2 (Straceny 14, Pikl 98 - golden goal)
Sparta 1 (Janosek 32)
Aet. **HT:** 1-1. **90mins:** 1-1

DENMARK

May 27: AaB 2 Midtjylland 1; AB 2 Viborg 0; HFK Sonderjylland 1 Herfolge 2; OB 0 AGF 4; FC Copenhagen 1 Lyngby 1; Silkeborg 0 Brondby 1.
June 10: AGF 4 AaB 0; Herfolge 0 AB 3; Midtjylland 6 HFK Sonderjylland 0; Lyngby 1 OB 3; FC Copenhagen 3 Brondby 1; Viborg 2 Silkeborg 4.
June 13: AaB 2 Lyngby 0; Brondby 2 Viborg 1; AB 1 Midtjylland 1; HFK Sonderjylland 2 AGF 2; OB 0 FC Copenhagen 1; Silkeborg 1 Herfolge 2.

DENMARK – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Copenhagen	33	17	12	4	55	27	63
Brondby	33	17	7	9	71	42	58
Silkeborg	33	15	11	7	49	36	56
Midtjylland	33	14	11	8	54	43	53
AaB	33	13	10	10	51	49	49
Viborg	33	13	7	13	52	42	46
OB	33	13	7	13	49	45	46
AGF	33	13	5	15	54	58	44
Lyngby	33	12	8	13	40	53	44
AB	33	8	15	10	43	41	39
Herfolge	33	7	9	17	41	65	30
HFK S'jylland	33	1	8	24	30	88	11

GEORGIA

GEORGIA: CHAMP'SHIP POOL – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Torpedo Kutaisi	10	6	2	2	15	7	44 [24]
Lokomotiv Tbil	10	3	4	3	8	9	41 [28]
Dinamo Tbilisi	10	3	5	2	13	9	38 [24]
WIT Georgia	10	4	4	2	14	9	35 [19]
Kolkheti 1913*	10	2	2	6	10	19	21 [16]
Merani 91*	10	1	3	6	2	15	19 [16]

Teams carried forward half their points (figure in brackets) from the regular season
**3pts deducted for alleged match-fixing*

CUP FINAL

May 26 - Lokomotiv stadium, Tbilisi
Torpedo Kutaisi 0
Lokomotiv Tbilisi 0
Aet. **Att:** 35,000
Torpedo 4-3 on pens

GREECE

May 26: Iraklis 3 Ionikos 2; Xanthi 0 AEK 1.
May 27: Athinaikos 1 Ethnikos A 3; Panionios 0 OFI 2; Giannina 3 Paniliakos 0; Kalamata 2 Panathinaikos 4; PAOK 5 Panahaiki 1; Aris 2 Olympiakos 2.

GREECE – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympiakos	30	25	3	2	84	22	78
Panathinaikos	30	20	6	4	61	20	66
AEK	30	19	4	7	61	34	61
PAOK	30	14	9	7	66	48	51
Iraklis	30	14	4	12	45	40	46
Ionikos	30	12	8	10	46	46	44
Aris	30	13	5	12	37	41	44
Xanthi	30	11	5	14	24	37	38
Panionios	30	9	9	12	39	42	36
Ethnikos A	30	9	7	14	34	52	34
Panahaiki	30	9	6	15	39	56	33
OFI	30	8	9	13	39	49	33
Giannina	30	8	9	13	40	53	33
Paniliakos	30	7	8	15	26	46	29
Kalamata	30	4	9	17	39	66	21
Athinaikos	30	5	5	20	37	65	20

HOLLAND

Sunday, May 27

Ajax 5 (Van der Vaart 22, 30, Van der Meyde 53, Arveladze 60, Van der Gun 71)
AZ 1 (Boussatta 26) Att: 36,656

Heerenveen 1 (Allback 90)
Twente 1 (Vennegoor of Hesselink 85) Att: 14,150

NEC 2 (Schulp 33, Van Rijswijk 58)
PSV 4 (Bruggink 10, 34, 70, Van der Doelen 89) Att: 12,000

RBC 0
Feyenoord 1 (Elmander 65) Att: 5,000

RKC 3 (Hoogendorp 9, Larney 27, Redan 67)
Roda JC 2 (Lawal 86, 90) Att: 6,200

Sparta 2 (Langerak 10, Boukhari pen 43)
Vitesse 2 (Mbamba 44, Sikora 67) Att: 5,547

Utrecht 6 (Gluscevic 1, 57, Van Mol 14, 43, Kuijt 34, Tanghe 52)
Groningen 0 Att: 13,500

Thursday, May 31

De Graafschap 1 (Promes 56)
NAC 1 (Stewart 21) Att: 11,000

Fortuna 4 (Van Barneveld 1, Gerritsen 40, Volmer 51, Heering 72)
Willem II 1 (Ceesay 2) Att: 9,000

HOLLAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV	34	25	8	1	73	23	83
Feyenoord	34	21	3	10	67	37	66
Ajax	34	18	7	9	85	43	61
Roda JC	34	17	8	9	59	41	59
Utrecht	34	17	8	9	58	43	59
Vitesse	34	16	11	7	56	43	59
RKC	34	16	11	7	48	36	59
Willem II	34	14	9	11	60	50	51
NAC	34	13	10	11	41	40	49
Heerenveen	34	11	14	9	51	42	47
Twente	34	10	11	13	47	60	41
NEC	34	9	13	12	42	53	40
AZ	34	9	8	17	45	63	35
Groningen	34	8	9	17	36	56	33
De Graafschap	34	9	4	21	44	66	31
Fortuna Sittard	34	8	7	19	31	64	31
Sparta	34	6	7	21	42	72	25
RBC	34	4	2	28	37	90	14

TOP GOALSCORERS
24 Mateja Kezman (PSV)
21 Ali El Khattabi (Sparta)
19 Yannis Anastasiou (Roda JC)
19 Igor Gluscevic (Utrecht)

HUNGARY

May 25: Vasas 3 Dunaferr 2.
May 26: Debrecen 3 Ujpest 4; Videoton 1 MTK 0; Gyor 3 Tatabanya 2; Kispest-Honved 1 Zalaegerszeg 1.
May 27: Ferencvaros 1 Matav 0.
June 3: Tatabanya 2 Dunaferr 5.
June 8: Ujpest 5 Videoton 3.
June 9: Dunaferr 2 Debrecen 1; Zalaegerszeg 3 Tatabanya 2; MTK 1 Gyor 2; Matav 1 Vasas 0.
June 10: Kispest-Honved 0 Ferencvaros 0.
June 13: Tatabanya 1 MTK 5.

June 15: Vasas 3 Kispest-Honved 1.
June 16: Gyor 2 Ujpest 1; Debrecen 3 Matav 1; Videoton 1 Dunaferr 2; Ferencvaros 3 Zalaegerszeg 2.
June 20: Zalaegerszeg 2 MTK 1; Ujpest 1 Tatabanya 1; Dunaferr 4 Gyor 1; Matav 3 Videoton 2; Kispest-Honved 0 Debrecen 0; Ferencvaros 2 Vasas 0.
June 23: MTK 1 Ujpest 2; Debrecen 0 Ferencvaros 2; Videoton 4 Kispest-Honved 1; Gyor 4 Matav 2; Vasas 6 Zalaegerszeg 3.

HUNGARY – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	
Ferencvaros	22	12	8	2	36	14	48	[4]
Dunaferr	22	13	2	7	40	35	46	[5]
Vasas	22	10	6	6	42	33	40	[4]
Ujpest	22	10	5	7	40	37	40	[5]
Gyor	22	11	5	6	34	32	40	[2]
MTK	22	8	5	9	31	22	35	[6]
Kispest-Honved	22	9	6	7	33	31	34	[1]
Videoton	22	9	2	11	37	34	31	[2]
Matav	22	7	6	9	26	30	30	[3]
Zalaegerszeg	22	7	7	8	33	36	29	[1]
Debrecen	22	6	3	13	31	44	24	[3]
Tatabanya	22	1	3	18	20	55	12	[6]

Bonus points in brackets

HUNGARIAN CUP – FINAL

June 13 - Budapest
Debrecen 5 (Szatmari 39, Kerekes 47, Bajzat 65, 85, Ulvetzki 79)
Videoton 2 (Julinho 77, Zombori 89)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 7,000

ISRAEL

ISRAEL: TOP SIX – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Maccabi Haifa	38	24	10	4	68	28	82
Hapoel Tel Aviv	38	21	12	5	55	29	75
Hapoel Haifa	38	20	11	7	59	38	71
Maccabi Tel Aviv	38	19	11	8	73	33	68
Beitar Jerusalem*	38	18	9	11	49	42	62
Hap Petach Tikva	38	12	10	16	58	66	46

ISRAEL: BOTTOM SIX – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Maccabi Netanya	38	13	10	15	63	61	49
Mac Petach Tikva	38	13	8	17	43	52	47
H I Rishon Lez	38	11	8	19	41	61	41
SC Ashdod	38	10	8	20	44	57	38
Bnei Yehuda	38	8	9	21	38	64	33
Zafririm Holon	38	4	4	30	25	85	16

*Table split into two halves after 33 rounds. Final five games played against teams in own pool. *1pt deducted*

CUP FINAL

May 22 - Tel Aviv
Maccabi Tel Aviv 3 (Goldberg 56, Biton 75, Nimni 90)
Maccabi Petach Tikva 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 31,000

ITALY

Sunday, May 27

Brescia 2 (Hubner pen 10, Bachini 44)
Vicenza 1 (Comotto 86) Att: 17,000

Fiorentina 1 (Nuno Gomes 13)
Atalanta 1 (Doni pen 21) Att: 25,000

Inter 1 (Dalmat 90)
Lazio 1 (Crespo 42) Att: 20,000

Juventus 1 (Trezeguet 55)
Perugia 0 Att: 20,000

Lecce 1 (Viali 56)
Parma 2 (Milosevic 62, Mboma 82) Att: 22,716

Reggina 1 (Vargas 50)
Bari 0 Att: 22,500

Roma 1 (Montella 64)
Milan 1 (Coco 45) Att: 71,407

Udinese 0
Napoli 0 Att: 18,000

Verona 5 (Salvetti 3, 50, Adailton 37, Falcone og 44, Oddo pen 75)
Bologna 4 (Olive 2, Cipriani 60, Signori 79, 90) Att: 12,939

Sunday, June 10

Atalanta 0
Udinese 1 (Muzzi 31) Att: 15,793

Bari 1 (Andersson pen 44)
Inter 2 (Recoba pen 36, 67) Att: 9,510

Bologna 2 (Cruz pen 53, pen 85)
Lecce 2 (Vugrinec pen 34, Viali 63) Att: 25,373

Lazio 3 (Pierini og 34, Crespo 44, Negro 55)
Fiorentina 0 Att: 42,052

Milan 1 (Jose Mari 68)
Brescia 1 (Bachini 70) Att: 56,283

Napoli 2 (Amoruso 37, Pecchia 81)
Roma 2 (Batistuta 42, Totti 52) Att: 52,734

Parma 1 (Amoroso 68)
Verona 2 (Oddo pen 32, Cossato 85) Att: 19,182

Perugia 1 (Materazzi pen 62)
Reggina 1 (Zanchetta 31) Att: 17,378

Vicenza 0
Juventus 3 (Del Piero 36, Trezeguet 40, 51) Att: 18,461

Sunday, June 17

Brescia 3 (Tare 12, 36, Hubner 65)
Bari 1 (Poggi 9) Att: 16,486

Fiorentina 1 (Nuno Gomes 83)
Napoli 2 (Amoruso 48, Edmundo 90) Att: 28,321

Inter 2 (Seedorf 35, Vieri 44)
Bologna 1 (Cipriani 78) Att: 2,000

Juventus 2 (Trezeguet 5, Tacchinardi 63)
Atalanta 1 (Nappi 85) Att: 42,847

Lecce 2 (Vasari 47, 73)
Lazio 1 (Crespo pen 45) Att: 30,201

Reggina 2 (Morabito 77, Da Costa 81)
Milan 1 (Kaladze 69) Att: 25,912

Roma 3 (Totti 19, Montella 39, Batistuta 78)
Parma 1 (Di Vaio 82) Att: 64,763

Udinese 2 (Sosa 31, 37)
Vicenza 3 (Kallon 1, 11, Zauli 20) Att: 22,951

Verona 2 (Seric 22, Salvetti 70)
Perugia 1 (Tedesco 52) Att: 26,483

ITALY – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Roma	34	22	9	3	68	33	75
Juventus	34	21	10	3	61	27	73
Lazio	34	21	6	7	65	36	69
Parma	34	16	8	10	51	31	56
Inter	34	14	9	11	47	47	51
Milan	34	12	13	9	56	46	49
Atalanta	34	10	14	10	38	34	44
Brescia	34	10	14	10	44	42	44
Fiorentina	34	10	13	11	53	52	43
Bologna	34	11	10	13	49	53	43
Perugia	34	10	12	12	49	53	42
Udinese	34	11	5	18	49	59	38
Lecce	34	8	13	13	40	54	37
Verona	34	10	7	17	40	59	37
Reggina	34	10	7	17	32	49	37
Vicenza	34	9	9	16	37	51	36
Napoli	34	8	12	14	35	51	36
Bari	34	5	5	24	31	68	20

TOP GOALSCORERS
26 Hernan Crespo (Lazio)
24 Andrii Shevchenko (Milan)
22 Enrico Chiesa (Fiorentina)
20 Gabriel Batistuta (Roma)

RELEGATION PLAY-OFF

Verona beat Reggina (1-0, 1-2; agg 2-2) on away goals to stay up

ITALIAN CUP – FINAL

1st leg - May 24 - Ennio Tardini stadium, Parma
Parma 0
Fiorentina 1 (Vanoli 87)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 17,685. **Ref:** Borriello

ESM EUROPEAN SPORTS MAGAZINES

ELEVEN
TEAM OF THE SEASON/ MAY 2001

TEAM OF THE SEASON

Kahn (2, Bayern); Angloma (4, Valencia), Nesta (5, Lazio), Hyypia (3, Liverpool), Roberto Carlos (5, Real Madrid); Mendieta (3, Valencia), Scholl (3, Bayern), Totti (3, Roma), Nedved (3, Lazio); Crespo (3, Lazio), Owen (3, Liverpool)

Figures in brackets represent number of appearances in Team of the Month selections during the 2000-01 season

HOW THEY LINE UP (MAY)

Kahn (8, Bayern); Contra (5, Alaves), Andersson (4, Bayern), Hyypia (4, Liverpool), Ayala (4, Valencia); Mendieta (3, Valencia), McAllister (6, Liverpool), Effenberg (8, Bayern), Lizarazu (6, Bayern); Owen (6, Liverpool), Javi Moreno (4, Alaves).

HOW THEY VOTED (MAY)

A BOLA (PORTUGAL)

Kahn (Bayern); Cafu (Roma), Kuffour (Bayern), Ayala (Valencia), Roberto Carlos (Real Madrid); Gerrard (Liverpool), McAllister (Liverpool), Effenberg (Bayern), Mendieta (Valencia); Javi Moreno (Alaves), Chiesa (Fiorentina).

DON BALON (SPAIN)

Kahn (Bayern); Contra (Alaves), Ayala (Valencia), Hyypia (Liverpool), Lizarazu (Bayern); Martelinho (Boavista), Effenberg (Bayern), Hargreaves (Bayern), McAllister (Liverpool); Owen (Liverpool) Chiesa (Fiorentina).

FOOT (BELGIUM)

Kahn (Bayern); Angloma (Valencia), Hyypia (Liverpool), Fabbri (Nantes), Lizarazu (Bayern); Carriere (Nantes), Effenberg (Bayern), Totti (Roma), Scholl (Bayern); Owen (Liverpool), Javi Moreno (Alaves).

FRANCE FOOTBALL (FRANCE)

Kahn (Bayern); Sagnol (Bayern), Samuel (Roma), Hyypia (Liverpool), Bohme (Schalke); Carriere (Nantes); Tommasi (Roma), Effenberg (Bayern); Figo (Real Madrid), Owen (Liverpool), Larsson (Celtic).

GAZZETTA DELLO SPORT (ITALY)

Kahn (Bayern); Contra (Alaves), Hyypia (Liverpool), Andersson (Bayern), Lizarazu (Bayern); Mendieta (Valencia), Effenberg (Bayern), Ivan Helguera (Real Madrid), McAllister (Liverpool); Montella (Roma), Raul (Real Madrid).

KICKER (GERMANY)

Kahn (Bayern); Contra (Alaves), Ayala (Valencia), Andersson (Bayern), Lizarazu (Bayern); Gerrard (Liverpool), Effenberg (Bayern), McAllister (Liverpool), Zidane (Juventus); Owen (Liverpool), Javi Moreno (Alaves).

VOETBAL INTERNATIONAL (HOLLAND)

Kahn (Bayern); Contra (Alaves), Andersson (Bayern), Tudor (Juventus), Lizarazu (Bayern); Finidi (Mallorca), McAllister (Liverpool), Effenberg (Bayern), Guti (Real Madrid); Owen (Liverpool), Crespo (Lazio).

WORLD SOCCER (UK)

Kahn (Bayern); Contra (Alaves), Andersson (Bayern), Ayala (Valencia), Lizarazu (Bayern); Effenberg (Bayern), McAllister (Liverpool), Mendieta (Valencia), Hargreaves (Bayern); Owen (Liverpool), Javi Moreno (Alaves).

2nd leg - June 13 - Artemio Franchi stadium, Florence
Fiorentina 1 (Nuno Gomes 65)
Parma 1 (Milosevic 38)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** De Santis
Fiorentina 2-1 on agg

LUXEMBOURG

CUP FINAL

May 24
Etzella Ettlebruck 5 (Grettnich 24, 61, 80, Mischo 63, Holtz 83)
Wiltz 3 (Favouri 45, Omervic pen 71, pen 73)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 9,313

MACEDONIA

MACEDONIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sloga	26	20	3	3	61	15	63
Vardar	26	20	3	3	52	15	63
Pobeda	26	18	2	6	64	27	56
Belasica	26	17	4	5	56	22	55
Sileks	26	14	1	11	52	40	43
Rabotnicki	26	12	3	11	43	36	39
Cementarnica	26	11	3	12	38	31	36
Pelister	26	10	4	12	41	38	34
Osogovo	26	10	4	12	39	42	34
Makedonija	26	9	4	13	44	42	31
Sasa	26	8	5	13	39	47	29
Skendija	26	9	1	16	34	48	28
Borec	26	4	1	21	18	80	13
Tikves	26	1	0	25	12	110	3

MACEDONIAN CUP – FINAL

May 24 - Gradski stadium, Skopje
Pelister 2 (Micevski 14, Stojkovski 36)
Sloga 1 (Nuhiji 24)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Bauta

MOLDOVA

MOLDOVA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Serif	28	21	4	3	58	18	67
Zimbru	28	20	6	2	46	15	66
Tiligul	28	11	8	9	33	34	41
Constructorul	28	10	9	9	30	30	39
Nistru Otaci	28	9	6	13	31	39	33
FC Agro	28	6	7	15	26	47	25
Haiducul	28	6	7	15	34	45	25
Olimpia Balti	28	3	5	20	19	49	14

MOLDOVAN CUP – FINAL

May 23 - Republican stadium, Chisinau
Nistru 0
Serif 0
Aet. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Chepoi
Serif 5-4 on pens

NORWAY

June 10: Brann 2 Bodo/Glimt 2; Lillestrom 4 Molde 1; Lyn 1 Rosenborg 1; Odd Grenland 3 Moss 1; Sogndal 0 Tromso 3; Stromsgodset 4 Bryne 0; Stabaek 0 Viking 3.
June 16: Rosenborg 2 Lillestrom 2.
June 17: Bodo/Glimt 2 Stromsgodset 2; Bryne 2 Sogndal 3; Moss 3 Lyn 1; Tromso 0 Odd Grenland 3; Viking 0 Brann 2; Molde 1 Stabaek 4.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosenborg	11	8	2	1	32	12	26
Viking	11	8	2	1	24	11	26
Brann	11	6	2	3	29	17	20
Odd Grenland	11	6	2	3	21	11	20
Lillestrom	11	6	2	3	22	17	20
Stabaek	11	6	1	4	17	20	19
Molde	11	5	2	4	23	19	17
Moss	11	5	1	5	16	17	16
Sogndal	11	4	0	7	12	25	12
Stromsgodset	11	2	4	5	16	26	10
Tromso	11	3	0	8	8	18	9
Bryne	11	2	2	7	12	23	8
Lyn	11	1	4	6	13	19	7
Bodo/Glimt	11	1	4	6	10	20	7

POLAND

June 2: Gornik 1 Amica 0.
June 9: Odra 2 Amica 1; Pogon 3 Polonia 4; Gornik 2 Stomil 0; Widzew 0 Katowice 0; Groclin 1 Slask 2; R Radzionkow 2 R Chorzow 3; Zaglebie 2 Orlen 1; Legia 1 Wisla 2.
June 13: Amica 3 Legia 2; Wisla 3 Zaglebie 0; Orlen 6 R Radzionkow 3; R Chorzow 4 Groclin 3; Slask 0 Widzew 0; Katowice 1 Gornik 1; Stomil 0 Pogon 1; Polonia 1 Odra 2.

POLAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wisla	30	19	5	6	66	27	62
Pogon	30	16	5	9	43	33	53
Legia	30	14	8	8	45	29	50
Polonia	30	13	7	10	38	30	46
Zaglebie	30	14	4	12	43	40	46
R Chorzow	30	13	5	12	50	48	44
Amica	30	13	5	12	48	44	44
Katowice	30	9	15	6	28	22	42
Odra	30	10	9	11	39	46	39
Groclin	30	9	10	11	35	38	37
Slask	30	9	9	12	32	38	36
Widzew	30	9	9	12	33	40	36
Gornik	30	9	7	14	29	35	34
Stomil	30	10	4	16	22	41	34
Orlen	30	9	4	17	37	55	31
R Radzionkow	30	9	4	17	29	51	31

PORTUGAL

Sunday, May 27

Alverca 2 (Milinkovic 66, Caju 90)
Campomaiorense 1 (Beke 73)

Aves 4 (Douala 3, 23, Abilio pen 19, Marco Aleixo 80)
Benfica 4 (Van Hooijdonk 31, 68, Joao Tomas 36, Andre 90)

Beira Mar 3 (Rui Neves og 62, Ricardo Sousa pen 86, Fary 89)
Estrela Amadora 3 (Eric Gaucho 9, 70, Semedo 18)

Gil Vicente 3 (Paulo Cesar 48, Nuno Assis 69, Jean Pierre 85)
Pacos Ferreira 1 (Leonardo 74)

Guimaraes 1 (Sion 50)
Farense 0

FC Porto 4 (Deco 12, 19, 45, Ricardo Silva 63)
Boavista 0

Salgueiros 2 (Joao Pedro 26, Ouattara 37)
Belenenses 0

Sporting Braga 3 (Ze Roberto 27, Castanheira 35, Abiodum 51)
Uniao Leiria 5 (Derlei 45, 79, To Ze 78, 89, Dinda 90)

Sporting Lisbon 1 (Pedro Barbosa 8)
Maritimo 0

PORTUGAL – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boavista	34	23	8	3	63	22	77
FC Porto	34	24	4	6	73	27	76
Sporting Lisbon	34	19	5	10	56	37	62
Sporting Braga	34	16	9	9	58	48	57
Uniao Leiria	34	15	11	8	46	41	56
Benfica	34	15	9	10	54	44	54
Belenenses	34	14	10	10	43	36	52
Beira Mar	34	14	7	13	45	49	49
Pacos Ferreira	34	12	12	10	47	39	48
Maritimo	34	12	7	15	34	37	43
Alverca	34	12	7	15	45	52	43
Salgueiros	34	13	4	17	41	55	43
Farense	34	10	9	15	37	47	39
Gil Vicente	34	10	7	17	34	41	37
Guimaraes	34	9	9	16	41	49	36
Campomaiorense	34	7	11	16	29	58	32
Aves	34	4	10	20	31	68	22
Estrela Amadora	34	4	7	23	30	57	19

TOP GOALSCORERS
22 Pena (FC Porto)
19 Pierre Van Hooijdonk (Benfica)
17 Joao Tomas (Benfica)
17 Rafael (Pacos Ferreira)
16 Hassan Nader (Farense)

PORTUGUESE CUP – FINAL

June 10 - National stadium, Lisbon
FC Porto 2 (Pena 13, Alenichev 80)
Maritimo 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 40,000

ROMANIA

May 26: Brasov 1 Ceahlaul 1; Foresta 0 Dinamo 1; National 3 Arges 0; Astra 1 Bacau 1; Gloria 2 Rocar 0; U Craiova 2 Petrolul 0; Rapid 2 Gaz Metan 1; Steaua 5 Otelul 0.
June 9: Ceahlaul 0 Otelul 0; Dinamo 3 U Craiova 1; Arges 0 Rapid 2; Brasov 2 Gloria 0; Bacau 3 National 2; Gaz Metan 1 Steaua 3; Petrolul 3 Astra 1; Rocar 3 Foresta 2.
June 13: Astra 4 Dinamo 3; Foresta 1 Brasov 0; Gloria 2 Ceahlaul 0; National 2 Petrolul 0; Otelul 2 Gaz Metan 0; Rapid 1 Bacau 0; Steaua 3 Arges 3; U Craiova 3 Rocar 1.

ROMANIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Steaua	30	17	9	4	56	32	60
Dinamo	30	15	6	9	56	44	51
Brasov	30	15	5	10	33	25	50
Rapid	30	13	10	7	38	25	49
Arges	30	12	10	8	42	42	46
Gloria	30	13	4	13	44	42	43
National	30	13	4	13	40	40	43
U Craiova	30	11	8	11	34	38	41
Petrolul	30	12	4	14	34	36	40
Astra	30	11	7	12	41	36	40
Ceahlaul	30	9	11	10	36	41	38
Otelul	30	10	8	12	33	39	38
Foresta	30	8	12	10	39	43	36
Bacau	30	9	7	14	38	45	34
Rocar	30	10	4	16	41	56	34
Gaz Metan	30	3	9	18	21	42	18

ROMANIAN CUP – FINAL

June 16 - Bucharest
Dinamo 4 (Mihalcea 7, 77, Niculae 55, pen 64)
Rocar 2 (Ursu 9, Nicolae 32)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Meier (Swi)

RUSSIA

May 25: Lokomotiv M 5 Zenit 1.
May 26: Saturn 1 CSKA 1; Fakel 2 Torpedo-ZIL 0; Dinamo 3 Rostselmash 1; Kryliya Sovetov 3 Rotor 0; Torpedo M 2 Spartak 0; Alaniya 1 Chernomorets 0; Anzhi 2 Sokol 0.
June 10: Chernomorets 0 Anzhi 0; Spartak 1 Alaniya 1; Rotor 1 Torpedo M 1; Rostselmash 2 Kryliya Sovetov 0; Torpedo-ZIL 1 Dinamo 1; Saturn 0 Fakel 0; Sokol 1 Lokomotiv M 2.
June 11: CSKA 1 Zenit 1.
June 16: Fakel 1 CSKA 1; Dinamo 2 Saturn 0; Kryliya Sovetov 2 Torpedo-ZIL 1; Torpedo M 1 Rostselmash 1; Alaniya 3 Rotor 1; Anzhi 1 Spartak 2; Lokomotiv M 4 Chernomorets 0; Zenit 1 Sokol 1.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kryliya Sovetov	13	8	2	3	16	6	26
Spartak	13	7	4	2	14	10	25
Lokomotiv M	13	7	3	3	21	10	24
Sokol	13	7	3	3	18	16	24
Torpedo M	13	6	5	2	24	12	23
CSKA	13	5	4	4	13	12	19
Zenit	13	5	4	4	15	18	19
Dinamo	13	4	5	4	16	13	17
Anzhi	13	4	5	4	10	9	17
Alaniya	13	5	1	7	12	18	16
Rostselmash	13	4	3	6	10	13	15
Saturn	13	3	4	6	11	11	13
Fakel	13	3	3	7	11	15	12
Rotor	13	3	3	7	12	18	12
Torpedo-ZIL	13	3	3	7	10	16	12
Chernomorets	13	2	4	7	6	22	10

RUSSIAN CUP – FINAL

June 20 - Moscow
Lokomotiv Moscow 1 (Dzhanashia 90)
Anzhi 1 (Sirkhayev 89)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 1-1
Lokomotiv 4-3 on pens

SLOVAKIA

SLOVAKIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter Bratislava	36	25	5	6	73	28	80
Slovan Bratislava	36	21	8	7	84	49	71
Ruzomberok	36	15	10	11	51	48	55
Artmedia Petrzalka	36	15	9	12	59	55	54
Zilina	36	11	12	13	41	46	45
Matador	36	9	13	14	47	53	40
Tatran	36	10	10	16	44	54	40
Trencin	36	11	6	19	35	59	39
Kosice	36	10	7	19	42	61	37
Trnava	36	8	10	18	39	62	34

SLOVENIA

SLOVENIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Maribor	33	18	8	7	61	36	62
Olimpija	33	18	6	9	73	46	60
Primorje	33	16	8	9	47	34	56
Mura	33	14	9	10	43	39	51
Publikum	33	15	5	13	59	52	50
Koper	33	12	10	11	43	43	46
HIT Gorica	33	13	4	16	52	46	43
Rudar	33	12	7	14	43	44	43
Korotan	33	12	7	14	44	51	43
Domzale	33	11	4	18	45	64	37
Dravograd	33	10	5	18	48	62	35
Tabor	33	7	7	19	34	75	28

SPAIN

Saturday, May 26

Las Palmas 0
Celta Vigo 1 (Alvaro og 51) Att: 15,780

Real Madrid 5 (Raul 22, 82, Guti 23, Hierro 51, Ivan Helguera 67)
Alaves 0 Att: 75,000

Sunday, May 27

Athletic Bilbao 1 (Urzaiz 78)
Malaga 3 (Musampa 28, Sandro 86, Agostinho 90) Att: 20,000

Barcelona 0
Oviedo 1 (Jaime 46) Att: 50,000

La Coruna 1 (Makaay 75)
Valladolid 2 (Kaviedes 44, Fernando Sales 63) Att: 30,000

Mallorca 4 (Eto'o 1, 37, Finidi 35, Riera 90)
Rayo Vallecano 0 Att 18,000

Numancia 2 (Nagore 45, Rosu 64)
Espanyol 1 (Tamudo 4) Att: 9,000

Racing Santander 1 (Mazzoni 48)
Valencia 1 (Mendieta 90) Att: 22,000

Villarreal 2 (Escoda 20, Palermo 64)
Osasuna 0 Att: 13,000

Zaragoza 1 (Sundgren 24)
Real Sociedad 1 (De Paula 31) Att: 26,000

Sunday, June 10

Alaves 2 (Karmona 4, Azkoitia 57)
Mallorca 4 (Nadal 6, Finidi 47, Biagini 72, Eto'o 83) Att: 12,075

Athletic Bilbao 1 (Urzaiz 73)
Real Sociedad 3 (Jankauskas 30, De Pedro 40, Idiakez pen 87) Att: 33,000

Celta Vigo 1 (Mostovoi pen 81)
Villarreal 0 Att: 29,000

Espanyol 3 (Arteaga 1, Tamudo 32, Posse 36)
Las Palmas 2 (Schurrer 30, Orlando 87) Att: 13,800

Malaga 2 (Musampa 26, Rufete 65)
Racing Santander 1 (Manjarin 74) Att: 16,000

Osasuna 1 (Josue 69)
Zaragoza 0 Att: 19,000

Oviedo 1 (Jaime 11)
Real Madrid 1 (Solari 26) Att: 29,000

Rayo Vallecano 2 (Luis Cembranos 39, 83)
Numancia 1 (Rosu 25) Att: 14,000

Valencia 0
La Coruna 1 (Makaay 68) Att: 45,000

Valladolid 2 (Kaviedes 59, Fernando 61)
Barcelona 2 (Guardiola 2, Overmars 81) Att: 13,000

Saturday, June 16

Las Palmas 1 (Orlando 22)
Rayo Vallecano 0 Att: 12,710

Numancia 2 (Jaume 18, Ivan Perez 77)
Alaves 1 (Javi Moreno 75) Att: 9,200

Racing Santander 3 (Regueiro 48, 75, Mazzoni 58)
Athletic Bilbao 0 Att: 8,000

Villarreal 4 (Escoda 8, Gracia 38, Navas og 48, Palermo 90)
Espanyol 0 Att: 16,000

Sunday, June 17

Barcelona 3 (Rivaldo 4, 45, 88)
Valencia 2 (Baraja 26, 47) Att: 85,000

La Coruna 4 (Djalminha 8, 48, Makaay 57, Victor 80)
Malaga 0 Att: 32,000

Mallorca 4 (Engonga pen 36, Eto'o 58, Ibagaza 64, Novo 90)
Oviedo 2 (Oli 59, Ivan Ania 78) Att: 20,000

Real Madrid 2 (Raul 24, 86)
Valladolid 1 (Kaviedes 78) Att: 57,323

Real Sociedad 0
Osasuna 1 (Ivan Rosado 43) Att: 28,000

Zaragoza 1 (Jamelli 58)
Celta Vigo 1 (Catanha 52) Att: 25,000

SPAIN – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Madrid	38	24	8	6	81	40	80
La Coruna	38	22	7	9	73	44	73
Mallorca	38	20	11	7	61	43	71
Barcelona	38	17	12	9	80	57	63
Valencia	38	18	9	11	55	34	63
Celta Vigo	38	16	11	11	51	49	59
Villarreal	38	16	9	13	58	52	57
Malaga	38	16	8	14	60	61	56
Espanyol	38	14	8	16	46	44	50
Alaves	38	14	7	17	58	59	49
Las Palmas	38	13	7	18	42	62	46
Athletic Bilbao	38	11	10	17	44	60	43
Real Sociedad	38	11	10	17	52	68	43
Rayo Vallecano	38	10	13	15	56	68	43
Osasuna	38	10	12	16	43	54	42
Valladolid	38	9	15	14	42	50	42
Zaragoza	38	9	15	14	54	57	42
Oviedo	38	11	8	19	51	67	41
Racing Santander	38	10	9	19	48	62	39
Numancia	38	10	9	19	40	64	39

TOP GOALSCORERS

24 Raul (Real Madrid)
23 Rivaldo (Barcelona)
22 Javi Moreno (Alaves)
19 Diego Tristan (La Coruna)
18 Patrick Kluivert (Barcelona)
17 Julio Cesar Dely Valdes (Malaga)
16 Catanha (Celta Vigo)
16 Roy Makaay (La Coruna)

SPANISH CUP

Semi-finals

1st legs
June 20: Atletico Madrid 0 Zaragoza 2.
June 21: Celta Vigo 3 Barcelona 1.

2nd legs
June 23: Zaragoza 0 Atletico Madrid 1 *Zaragoza 2-1 on agg.*
June 24: Barcelona 1 Celta Vigo 1 *Celta 4-2 on agg.*

SWEDEN

May 27: Sundsvall 0 Djurgardens 0; Halmstads 4 Norrkoping 0; Malmo 1 Hammarby 0.
May 28: AIK 2 Hacken 0; Helsingborgs 3 Trelleborgs 0; Elfsborg 1 Orebro 0; Orgryte 0 IFK Gothenburg 2.
June 10: Sundsvall 1 Elfsborg 3; Halmstads 0 Orgryte 1; Helsingborgs 2 AIK 0.
June 11: IFK Gothenburg 1 Hacken 1; Norrkoping 1 Orebro 5; Trelleborgs 0 Malmo 4.
June 12: Djurgardens 2 Hammarby 0.
June 13: AIK 2 Halmstads 3.
June 17: Hammarby 1 Norrkoping 1; Orgryte 2 Sundsvall 0.
June 18: Hacken 1 Djurgardens 2; Elfsborg 3 IFK Gothenburg 2; Orebro 3 Trelleborgs 2.
June 19: Malmo 0 Helsingborgs 1.
June 20: Sundsvall 1 AIK 2.
June 21: Orgryte 1 Elfsborg 1.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
IFK Gothenburg	10	5	4	1	19	8	19
Orgryte	11	5	4	2	17	10	19
Helsingborgs	10	5	3	2	15	7	18
Elfsborg	11	5	2	4	18	19	17
Malmo	10	5	1	4	14	11	16
AIK	11	4	3	4	12	12	15
Halmstads	10	4	2	4	20	12	14
Hammarby	10	3	5	2	10	8	14
Djurgardens	10	3	5	2	9	10	14
Orebro	10	3	4	3	16	15	13
Norrkoping	10	2	4	4	7	18	10
Hacken	10	2	3	5	9	16	9
Sundsvall	11	2	3	6	7	14	9
Trelleborgs	10	2	1	7	10	23	7

SWITZERLAND

CUP FINAL

June 10 - St Jakob stadium, Basle
Servette 3 (Lonfat 10, Petrov 29, Frei 55)
Yverdon 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Nobs

UKRAINE

May 26: Stal 0 Tavriya 1; Metalurh D 3 Kryvbas 0; Vorskla 0 Metalurh M 1; Karpaty 0 Dnipro 2; Metalurh Z 0 Dynamo 1.
June10: Stal 1 Nyva 0; Metalist 2 Metalurh D 0; Kryvbas 1 Vorskla 1; Metalurh M 2 Karpaty 0; Dnipro 2 Metalurh Z 0.
June 11: Tavriya 1 Dynamo 2; Shakhtar 0 CSKA 0.
June 15: Nyva 0 Shakhtar 7; CSKA 1 Metalist 0.
June 19: Nyva 0 Tavriya 2; CSKA 1 Stal 1; Metalurh D 1 Shakhtar 3; Vorskla 0 Metalist 1; Karpaty 2 Kryvbas 1; Metalurh Z 1 Metalurh M 0; Dynamo 2 Dnipro 1.

UKRAINE – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dynamo	26	20	4	2	58	17	64
Shakhtar	26	19	6	1	71	21	63
Dnipro	26	17	4	5	37	18	55
Metalurh D	26	11	9	6	30	24	42
Metalurh M	26	12	4	10	35	27	40
CSKA	26	10	10	6	30	23	40
Metalurh Z	26	9	8	9	28	31	35
Tavriya	26	8	9	9	24	31	33
Metalist	26	8	7	11	27	37	31
Karpaty	26	9	3	14	33	42	30
Kryvbas	26	6	7	13	23	37	25
Vorskla	26	5	6	15	17	30	21
Stal	26	3	6	17	19	49	15
Nyva	26	2	3	21	20	65	9

WALES

CUP FINAL

May 25 - The Racecourse, Wrexham
Barry Town 2 (Moralee 77, Lloyd 87)
Total Network Solutions 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,022. **Ref:** R A Jones

YUGOSLAVIA

May 26: Zeleznik 1 Cukaricki 1; Napredak 0 Milicionar 0; Radnicki K 0 Red Star 2; Buducnost 2 Zeta 0; Sartid 1 Rad 1; Obilic 1 Sutjeska 2; Radnicki N 1 Vojvodina 3; Hajduk R 1 OFK 0; Partizan 4 Zemun 1.
June 5: Sartid 1 Vojvodina 0.
June 9: Cukaricki 2 Partizan 3; Zemun 4 Hajduk R 0; OFK 4 Radnicki N 0; Vojvodina 1 Obilic 2; Sutjeska 2 Sartid 1; Rad 4 Buducnost 1; Zeta 1 Radnicki K 0; Red Star 9 Napredak 1; Milicionar 1 Zeleznik 2.
June 16: Milicionar 1 Cukaricki 1; Zeleznik 1 Red Star 2; Napredak 2 Zeta 0; Radnicki K 2 Rad 1; Buducnost 4 Sutjeska 3; Obilic 4 OFK 1; Radnicki N 3 Zemun 0; Hajduk R 4 Partizan 4.
June 20: Cukaricki 3 Hajduk R 1; Partizan 2 Radnicki N 1; Zemun 1 Obilic 1; OFK 3 Sartid 1; Vojvodina 4 Buducnost 0; Sutjeska 2 Radnicki K 3; Rad 4 Napredak 2; Zeta 3 Zeleznik 2; Red Star 4 Milicionar 1.

YUGOSLAVIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Red Star	34	28	4	2	93	20	88
Partizan	34	28	2	4	94	36	86
Obilic	34	19	6	9	53	37	63
Sartid	34	17	3	14	49	47	54
OFK	34	15	5	14	52	45	50
Vojvodina	34	13	8	13	51	36	47
Sutjeska	34	14	4	16	52	64	46
Zeleznik	34	12	8	14	49	56	44
Radnicki K	34	13	5	16	38	52	44
Cukaricki	34	13	4	17	42	50	43
Zemun	34	11	9	14	38	46	42
Hajduk R	34	12	6	16	45	51	42
Zeta	34	11	9	14	38	50	42
Rad	34	12	5	17	49	58	41
Buducnost	34	11	5	18	29	48	38
Napredak	34	8	10	16	38	63	34
Radnicki N	34	9	5	20	30	60	32
Milicionar	34	8	6	20	29	50	30

SOUTH AMERICA

LIBERTADORES CUP

Quarter-finals, 1st legs

May 22

Rosario Central (Arg) 1 (Pizzi 22)
America (Col) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Gonzalez (Par)
Rosario: Tombolini - Loeschbor, Perez, Marra, Quinteros, Diaz, De Bruno (Moreno y Fabianesi 79), Erroz, Pizzi, E Gonzalez (Arriola 69), Maceratesi (Arias 63). *Sent off: Quinteros 86min.*
America: Barbat - Cardona, C Garcia, Navarro, Maziri, Vargas, L A Garcia (Betancourt 62), Gonzalez, Ferreira, Zapata (Zuluaga 79), Vasquez (Roganovich 72). *Sent off: Roganovich 86min.*

May 23

Palmeiras (Bra) 3 (Lopes 17, 62, 89)
Cruzeiro (Bra) 3 (Jackson 42, Geovanni 44, Jorge Wagner 82)
HT: 1-2. **Ref:** Almeida (Bra)
Palmeiras: Marcos - Arce, Leonardo, Alexandre, Felipe, Magrao, Alex (Tuta 79), Galeano, Lopes, Juninho (Fernando 46), Fabio Junior (Munoz 57). *Sent off: Magrao 38min.*
Cruzeiro: Andre - Nenem (Marcelo Ramos 71), Cris, Luisao, Marcus Vinicios, Ricardinho, Cleber Monteiro (Jorge Wagner 58), Jackson, Oseas, Geovanni, Sorin. *Sent off: Geovanni 86min.*

River Plate (Arg) 0
Cruz Azul (Mex) 0
Ref: Rezende (Bra)
River Plate: Costanzo - Ayala, Rojas, Lombardi, Astrada, Yepes, Saviola, Pereyra (Escudero 60), Cuevas (Cavenaghi 66), Ortega, Alvarez (D'Alessandro 46).
Cruz Azul: O Perez - Angeles, Almaguer, Brown, Hernandez, Galdames, Gutierrez (Campos 76), Pinheiro, Morales, Cardozo (Belloso 76), Palencia.

Vasco da Gama (Bra) 0
Boca Juniors (Arg) 1 (Guillermo Barros Schelotto 69)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Mendez (Uru)
Vasco: Helton - Marica (Jorginho 46), Geder, Alexandre Torres, Fabiano (Zada 81), Jorginho Paulista, Euller, Pedrinho (Anderson 66), Paulo Miranda, Juninho Paulista, Viola.
Boca: Cordoba - Bermudez, Matellan, Ibarra, Serna, Burdisso, Guillermo Barros Schelotto (Perez 89), Villarreal, Delgado (Gimenez 89), Riquelme (Pinto 89), Traverso.

Quarter-finals, 2nd legs

May 29

America 3 (Vasquez 5, Herrera 9, Gonzalez 67)
Rosario Central 2 (Pizzi 89, 90)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Larrionda (Uru)
Agg 3-3. Rosario 4-3 on pens
America: Barbat - Gonzalez (Virviescas 85), Navarro, C Garcia, Maziri, L A Garcia, Vargas (Zapata 78), Ferreira, Mafla (Cardona 60), Vasquez, Herrera.
Rosario: Tombolini - Marra (Arias 65), Loeschbor, Diaz, Lequi, Moreno y Fabianesi, Erroz, Cuberas, E Gonzalez (De Bruno 76), Maceratesi (Vespa 72), Pizzi. *Sent off: Arias 75min.*

May 30

Boca Juniors 3 (Matellan 11, Guillermo Barros Schelotto 21, 31)
Vasco da Gama 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Hidalgo (Per)
Boca 4-0 on agg
Boca: Cordoba (Abbondancieri 71) - Ibarra, Bermudez, Burdisso, Matellan, Villarreal, Serna, Traverso (Pereda 67), Riquelme (Gaitan 79), Guillermo Barros Schelotto, Delgado.
Vasco: Helton - Clebson, Odvan, Alexandre Torres (Leonardo Henrique 7; Pedrinho 46), Nasa, Jorginho Paulista, Euller, Paulo Miranda, Jorginho, Juninho Paulista, Viola.

Cruz Azul 3 (Palencia 19, 25, Cardozo 43)
River Plate 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Pereira (Bra)
Cruz Azul 3-0 on agg
Cruz Azul: O Perez - Angeles, Almaguer, Brown, Hernandez, Galdames, Gutierrez (Rodriguez 79), Pinheiro, Morales (Adomaitis 73), Cardozo, Palencia (Mora 63).
River Plate: Costanzo - Gandolfi, Garce, Yepes, Rojas, Diaz, Astrada (Pereyra 64), D'Alessandro (Alvarez 46), Saviola, Ortega, Cardetti (Cuevas 70). *Sent off: Garce 59min.*

Cruzeiro 2 (Alessandro 5, Cris 59)
Palmeiras 2 (Arce 53, Alexandre 85)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Simon (Bra)
Agg 5-5. Palmeiras 4-3 on pens
Cruzeiro: Andre - Nenem (Marcos Paulo 74), Cris, Luisao, Marcus Vinicios, Ricardinho, Cleber Monteiro, Jorge Wagner (Jackson 66), Oseas, Alessandro (Marcelo Ramos 83).
Palmeiras: Marcos - Arce, Alexandre, Leonardo, Felipe, Fernando, Galeano, Lopes, Alex, Juninho (Tuta 46; Munoz 56), Fabio Junior (Basilio 46).

Semi-finals, 1st legs

June 7

Boca Juniors 2 (Guillermo Barros Schelotto pen 43, Barijho 54)
Palmeiras 2 (Alex 18, Fabio Junior 53)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Aquino (Par)
Boca: Cordoba - Ibarra, Bermudez, Burdisso, Matellan, Villarreal (Gaitan 75), Serna, Traverso, Riquelme, Guillermo Barros Schelotto (Gimenez 46), Barijho. *Sent off: Barijho 77min.*
Palmeiras: Marcos - Arce, Alexandre, Leonardo, Felipe (Taddei 74), Fernando, Galeano, Magrao, Alex, Lopes (Basilio 60), Fabio Junior. *Sent off: Fernando 77min.*

Cruz Azul 2 (Cardozo 36, Palencia pen 75)
Rosario Central 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Hidalgo (Per)
Cruz Azul: O Perez - Angeles (Adomaitis 61), Almaguer, Brown, Hernandez, Galdames (Campos 46), Gutierrez, Pinheiro, Morales, Cardozo, Palencia (Belloso 79).
Rosario: Tombolini - Marra, Loeschbor, Diaz, Lequi, Vespa, Erroz, Cuberas (Perez 73), Moreno y Fabianesi, E Gonzalez (De Bruno 62), Pizzi (Maceratesi 87). *Sent off: Perez 88min.*

Semi-finals, 2nd legs

June 13

Palmeiras 2 (Fabio Junior 36, Bermudez og 66)
Boca Juniors 2 (Gaitan 2, Riquelme 17)
HT: 1-2. **Ref:** Ruiz (Col)
Agg 4-4. Boca 3-2 on pens

Palmeiras: Marcos - Arce, Alexandre, Leonardo, Felipe (Basilio 80), Magrao, Galeano, Alex, Juninho (Munoz 58), Fabio Junior (Argel 80), Lopes. *Sent off: Alexandre 44min.*
Boca: Cordoba - Ibarra, Bermudez, Burdisso, Matellan, Pinto (Battaglia 82), Serna, Traverso, Riquelme, Gaitan, Gimenez (Delgado 69). *Sent off: Matellan 87min.*

June 14

Rosario Central 3 (Pizzi pen 38, Maceratesi 42, 60)
Cruz Azul 3 (Almaguer 8, Adomaitis 44, Rodriguez 89)
HT: 2-2. **Ref:** Sanchez (Chl)
Cruz Azul 5-3 on agg
Rosario: Tombolini - Loeschbor, Lequi, Diaz, Erroz, Cuberas (Pierucci 81), De Bruno (Arias 54), Vespa, Pizzi, E Gonzalez, Maceratesi.
Cruz Azul: O Perez - Angeles (Mendoza 60), Almaguer, Brown, Hernandez, Galdames, Gutierrez, Pinheiro (Campos 78), Adomaitis (Rodriguez 60), Morales, Palencia.

FINAL, 1st leg

June 20 - Mexico City
Cruz Azul 0
Boca Juniors 1 (Delgado 85)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Rezende (Bra)
Cruz Azul: O Perez - Angeles (Campos 41), Almaguer, Brown, Hernandez, Galdames, Gutierrez (Adomaitis 53), Pinheiro, Morales, Cardozo, Palencia.
Boca: Cordoba - Ibarra, Bermudez, Burdisso, Rodriguez (Pinto 55), Villarreal (Pereda 78), Battaglia, Traverso, Riquelme, Gaitan, Gimenez (Delgado 60).

ARGENTINA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Friday, May 25

Independiente 0
Gimnasia LP 1 (Rocha og 26)

Saturday, May 26

Colon Santa Fe 1 (Graf 22)
Racing Club 1 (Milito 90)

Sunday, May 27

Estudiantes 0
Chacarita Juniors 1 (Brizuela 39)

Los Andes 2 (Maggiolo 17, Levato 43)
Argentinos Juniors 2 (Pena 25, Bustos 56)

River Plate 5 (Saviola 21, Ortega 28, 64, Cardetti 50, 81)
Almagro 1 (Demus 34)

Rosario Central 1 (Pierucci 19)
Newell's Old Boys 2 (Pavlovich 18, Saldana 86)

San Lorenzo 1 (Abreu 35)
Boca Juniors 0

Talleres Cordoba 3 (R Astudillo 15, Pino 21, Cuba 47)
Union Santa Fe 0

Velez Sarsfield 0
Belgrano Cordoba 3 (Artime 7, Liendo 63, 73)

Monday, May 28

Lanus 1 (Galvan 65)
Huracan 1 (Lobos 17)

Monday, June 4

Boca Juniors 4 (La Paglia pen 6, Rodriguez 27, Gaitan 54, 82)
Chacarita Juniors 4 (Brizuela 53, 65, Moreno 64, Gaitan 90)

Newell's Old Boys 0
Independiente 1 (Cambiasso 8)

Tuesday, June 5

Almagro 1 (Bevacqua 36)
Velez Sarsfield 2 (Dominguez 25, Camps 74)

Argentinos Juniors 0
San Lorenzo 2 (Romeo 20, 36)

Belgrano Cordoba 3 (Artime 27, 50, Gonzalez 61)
Colon Santa Fe 1 (Graf pen 68)

Gimnasia LP 2 (Pereyra pen 25, Enria 72)
Talleres Cordoba 1 (Franco 6)

Huracan 3 (Morales 14, Soto 61, 90)
River Plate 2 (Alvarez 63, Ortega 69)

Lanus 0
Estudiantes 2 (Colotto 15, Pompei 25)

Racing Club 4 (Estevez 7, 71, Canobbio 45, Chatruc 53)
Rosario Central 1 (Campora 64)

Union Santa Fe 4 (Valli 52, M Donnet 61, Israelevich 68, 90)
Los Andes 2 (Maggiolo 30, 71)

Saturday, June 9

Velez Sarsfield 2 (Bujan 11, Husain 15)
Huracan 0

Sunday, June 10

Chacarita Juniors 2 (Brizuela 7, Rivero 20)
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Zermatten 15)

Colon Santa Fe 2 (Cabrol 75, Graf 77)
Almagro 3 (Bevacqua 15, Sparapani 90, Centurion 90)

Estudiantes 1 (Galletti 13)
Boca Juniors 1 (Perez 57)

Independiente 0
Racing Club 1 (Estevez pen 66)

River Plate 1 (Ortega 61)
Lanus 2 (Klimowicz pen 40, Sarria 78)

Rosario Central 1 (Quinteros 83)
Belgrano Cordoba 3 (Liendo 3, 66, Artime 53)

San Lorenzo 2 (Romeo pen 8, Erviti 29)
Union Santa Fe 1 (Castillo 44)

Talleres Cordoba 1 (Albornos 75)
Newell's Old Boys 1 (Real 56)

Monday, June 11

Los Andes 3 (Maggiolo 40, Netto pen 43, Pieters 83)
Gimnasia LP 2 (Cufre 57, Fernandez 65)

ARGENTINA: CLOSING – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Lorenzo	19	15	2	2	43	17	47
River Plate	19	13	2	4	48	27	41
Boca Juniors	19	8	6	5	29	26	30
Argentinos Jnrs	19	8	5	6	27	22	29
Racing Club	19	7	8	4	21	20	29
Chacarita Juniors	19	8	5	6	21	25	29
Huracan	19	8	4	7	28	28	28
Velez Sarsfield	19	7	6	6	25	24	27
Estudiantes	19	7	6	6	23	24	27
Almagro	19	7	5	7	27	27	26
Talleres Cordoba	19	7	4	8	23	23	25
Newell's OB	19	7	3	9	27	28	24
Colon Santa Fe	19	6	5	8	22	27	23
Lanus	19	6	4	9	29	30	22
Union Santa Fe	19	5	5	9	32	36	20
Belgrano Cordoba	19	5	5	9	18	26	20
Independiente	19	5	4	10	18	21	19
Gimnasia LP	19	4	6	9	22	28	18
Los Andes*	19	5	6	8	24	32	18
Rosario Central	19	4	5	10	24	38	17

**3pts deducted*

TOP GOALSCORERS

15	Bernardo Romeo (San Lorenzo)
13	Martin Cardetti (River Plate)
11	Javier Saviola (River Plate)
10	Hugo Brizuela (Chacarita Juniors)

BOLIVIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

May 23: Jorge Wilstermann 6 Iberoamericana 2; Bolivar 1 The Strongest 2; Real Potosi 2 Union Central 1; Guabira 1 Blooming 1; Oriente 3 Independiente 2.
May 24: Mariscal Braun 6 Santa Cruz 2.
May 26: Iberoamericana 3 Guabira 0.
May 27: Independiente 4 Mariscal Braun 2; The Strongest 3 Oriente 1; Santa Cruz 1 Jorge Wilstermann 2; Union Central 1 Bolivar 0; Blooming 1 Real Potosi 0.
June 6: Mariscal Braun 0 The Strongest 1; Jorge Wilstermann 2 Guabira 1; Real Potosi 2 Iberoamericana 0; Santa Cruz 1 Independiente 2.
June 7: Bolivar 0 Blooming 0; Oriente 2 Union Central 1.
June 9: The Strongest 2 Santa Cruz 0; Independiente 3 Jorge Wilstermann 3.
June 10: Iberoamericana 2 Bolivar 3; Union Central 2 Mariscal Braun 0; Guabira 1 Real Potosi 1; Blooming 1 Oriente 0.
June 13: Jorge Wilstermann 0 Real Potosi 0; Independiente 2 The Strongest 2; Bolivar 5 Guabira 2; Santa Cruz 1 Union Central 0; Oriente 3 Iberoamericana 1.
June 14: Mariscal Braun 2 Blooming 2.
June 17: Blooming 1 Santa Cruz 1; Guabira 0 Oriente 1; Iberoamericana 1 Mariscal Braun 1; Real Potosi 1 Bolivar 2; The Strongest 2 Jorge Wilstermann 4; Union Central 2 Independiente 0.

BOLIVIA – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oriente	20	12	3	5	44	27	39
Bolivar	20	11	5	4	47	23	38
Blooming	20	8	9	3	31	23	33
J Wilstermann	20	8	8	4	37	32	32
Real Potosi	20	8	6	6	31	31	30
The Strongest	20	8	4	8	32	29	28
Independiente	20	7	6	7	28	32	27
Union Central	20	8	3	9	22	26	27
Guabira	20	6	4	10	25	32	22
Mariscal Braun	20	5	5	10	27	35	20
Iberoamericana	20	4	5	11	32	45	17
Santa Cruz	20	4	4	12	22	43	16

BRAZIL

COPA BRASIL – FINAL

1st leg - June 10
Gremio 2 (Luiz Mario 2)
Corinthians 2 (Marcelinho Carioca, Muller)

2nd leg - June 17
Corinthians 1 (Ewerthon)
Gremio 3 (Marinho, Zinho, Marcelinho Paraiba)
HT: 0-1
Gremio 5-3 on agg

CHILE

May 26: O'Higgins 1 U de Chile 5; Puerto Montt 1 San Felipe 1; Colo Colo 2 Santiago Morning 1.
May 27: U Catolica 5 Union Espanola 1; Audax Italiano 0 Dep Concepcion 2; Huachipato 0 Cobreloa 0; Santiago Wanderers 1 Coquimbo Unido 1.
June 3: Rangers 2 Palestino 3.
June 9: Coquimbo Unido 0 U Catolica 1; San Felipe 3 Huachipato 2; Palestino 1 U de Chile 4; Santiago Morning 0 Audax Italiano 3.
June 10: Colo Colo 2 O'Higgins 0; Dep Concepcion 2 Santiago Wanderers 0; Union Espanola 4 Puerto Montt 1; Cobreloa 1 Rangers 0.
June 16: Santiago Wanderers 3 Santiago Morning 1; Puerto Montt 1 Coquimbo Unido 1; O'Higgins 4 Palestino 3; U Catolica 2 Dep Concepcion 0.
June 17: U de Chile 1 Cobreloa 1; Rangers 2 San Felipe 1; Huachipato 2 U Espanola 2; Audax Italiano 0 Colo Colo 3.

CHILE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
U de Chile	13	9	3	1	30	13	30
Colo Colo	13	7	4	2	26	14	25
Sant Wanderers	13	7	4	2	24	13	25
Palestino	13	8	0	5	19	19	24
Cobreloa	13	6	4	3	17	10	22
San Felipe	13	6	3	4	21	17	21
Coquimbo Unido	13	6	3	4	15	13	21
Union Espanola	13	6	3	4	26	25	21
U Catolica	13	6	2	5	22	16	20
Dep Concepcion	13	5	2	6	15	18	17
Huachipato	13	3	5	5	20	19	14
Rangers	13	3	5	5	15	17	14
Audax Italiano	13	4	1	8	11	17	13
O'Higgins	13	3	1	9	16	36	10
Puerto Montt	13	2	3	8	13	28	9
Sant Morning	13	1	1	11	17	32	4

COLOMBIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

May 27: Pereira 0 Millonarios 1; Indep Santa Fe 0 At Nacional 0; Indep Medellin 5 At Junior 0; Real Cartagena 2 Tulua 1; Dep Cali 1 Envigado 0; Bucaramanga 0 Once Caldas 3; At Huila 2 Tolima 3; Dep Pasto 3 America 1.
June 6: America 1 Once Caldas 1.
June 10: America 3 Indep Medellin 2; At Nacional 1 Millonarios 0; Tolima 2 Real Cartagena 1; Indep Santa Fe 1 Bucaramanga 0; Once Caldas 2 Dep Pasto 1; At Junior 2 At Huila 0; Tulua 0 Dep Cali 1; Envigado 2 Pereira 1.
June 16: Indep Medellin 1 Once Caldas 1.
June 17: Dep Cali 3 Tolima 2; Bucaramanga 1 At Nacional 0; Millonarios 0 Envigado 3; Real Cartagena 1 At Junior 3; Dep Pasto 0 Indep Santa Fe 1; Pereira 1 Tulua 1; At Huila 0 America 1.
June 20: Bucaramanga 1 Dep Pasto 1; At Nacional 1 Envigado 1; At Junior 1 Dep Cali 1; Once Caldas 0 At Huila 1; Tulua 2 Millonarios 1; America 2 Real Cartagena 0; Tolima 3 Pereira 0; Indep Santa Fe 2 Indep Medellin 1.

COLOMBIA – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tulua	19	10	5	4	27	18	35
Tolima	19	10	3	6	32	25	33
Dep Cali	19	9	5	5	23	17	32
Once Caldas	19	9	4	6	29	23	31
Indep Santa Fe	19	8	6	5	21	17	30
America	19	9	2	8	32	32	29
Indep Medelin	19	8	5	6	36	22	29
At Junior	19	7	6	6	20	20	27
Envigado	19	7	5	7	24	27	26
Millonarios	19	7	3	9	25	19	24
Pereira	19	7	3	9	22	30	24
At Nacional	19	6	5	8	15	24	23
Real Cartagena	19	6	3	10	19	22	21
Dep Pasto	19	5	5	9	19	26	20
Bucaramanga	19	4	8	7	10	17	20
At Huila	19	5	2	12	22	37	17

ECUADOR

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

May 23: Emelec 1 Barcelona 0; Espoli 1 Dep Quito 1; LDU Portoviejo 0 El Nacional 1; Aucas 1 Olmedo 3; Macara 3 Delfin 0.
June 10: El Nacional 3 Emelec 2; Dep Quito 2 Aucas 0; Delfin 1 Espoli 1; Olmedo 1 Macara 0; Barcelona 3 LDU Portoviejo 2.
June 16: El Nacional 1 Olmedo 0.
June 17: Macara 1 Barcelona 0; Aucas 0 Espoli 0; LDU Portoviejo 0 Dep Quito 0; Emelec 3 Delfin 1.

ECUADOR – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
El Nacional	16	10	4	2	31	18	34
Espoli	16	8	5	3	29	16	29
Olmedo	16	9	2	5	25	20	29
Macara	16	6	4	6	19	15	22
Aucas	16	4	9	3	14	12	21
Emelec	16	5	5	6	21	26	20
Delfin	16	5	5	6	20	27	20
Barcelona	16	4	5	7	17	18	17
LDU Portoviejo	16	3	4	9	14	23	13
Dep Quito	16	3	3	10	14	29	12

PARAGUAY

FIRST STAGE

Quarter-finals

2nd legs
May 25: Olimpia 1 Sol de America 0
Olimpia 3-1 on agg.
May 26: Cerro Porteno 1 Guarani 2
Cerro Porteno 3-2 on agg.
May 27: Sportivo Luqueno 4 Cerro Cora 3
Sportivo Luqueno 5-3 on agg; Libertad 1 Colegiales 1
Agg 2-2. Libertad on better League stage record.

Semi-finals

1st legs
June 5: Libertad 0 Cerro Porteno 1.
June 6: Olimpia 0 Sportivo Luqueno 0.

2nd legs
June 10: Cerro Porteno 2 Libertad 1 *Cerro Porteno 3-1 on agg*; Sportivo Luqueno 2 Olimpia 0 *Sportivo Luqueno 2-0 on agg.*

FINAL

1st leg
June 16: Cerro Porteno 3 Sportivo Luqueno 0.

2nd leg
June 24: Sportivo Luqueno 1 Cerro Porteno 3 *Cerro Porteno 6-1 on agg.*

PERU

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

May 23: Alianza Atletico 1 Sporting Cristal 1; Sport Boys 3 Union Minas 2; Estudiantes 2 Cienciano 0; Alianza Lima 3 Juan Aurich 0; Coopsol Trujillo 2 Universitario 2.
May 24: Dep Wanka 1 Melgar 1.
May 27: Cienciano 4 Dep Wanka 2; Sporting Cristal 2 Sport Boys 0; Melgar 6 Estudiantes 0; Union Minas 1 Alianza Atletico 0; Coopsol Trujillo 3 Juan Aurich 2; Alianza Lima 1 Universitario 0.
June 6: Universitario 3 Sport Boys 2; Juan Aurich 1 Alianza Atletico 1; Dep Wanka 1 Sporting Cristal 1; Melgar 1 Alianza Lima 1; Cienciano 5 Coopsol Trujillo 0; Estudiantes 2 Union Minas 3.
June 10: Sporting Cristal 2 Melgar 2; Juan Aurich 1 Universitario 1; Alianza Lima 1 Coopsol Trujillo 0; Sport Boys 3 Estudiantes 0; Union Minas 0 Cienciano 1; Alianza Atletico 3 Dep Wanka 1.
June 16: Melgar 4 Union Minas 2; Coopsol Trujillo 7 Estudiantes 3; Universitario 3 Cienciano 0; Sporting Cristal 1 Juan Aurich 0.
June 17: Dep Wanka 4 Sport Boys 0; Alianza Atletico 2 Alianza Lima 2.

PERU – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Alianza Lima	20	12	7	1	39	16	43
Sporting Cristal	20	11	7	2	41	16	40
Cienciano	20	10	2	8	39	25	32
Juan Aurich	20	9	3	8	33	36	30
Melgar	20	8	5	7	41	29	29
Universitario	20	8	5	7	28	26	29
Sport Boys	20	8	4	8	33	39	28
Alianza Atletico	20	8	3	9	22	36	27
Union Minas	20	7	1	12	29	36	22
Coopsol Trujillo	20	6	4	10	34	44	22
Estudiantes	20	5	4	11	25	50	19
Dep Wanka	20	3	5	12	25	35	14

URUGUAY

CLASSIFICATION STAGE

May 25: Danubio 2 Cerro 2*.
May 26: Rocha 0 Nacional 3; Dep Maldonado 1 Bella Vista M 4.
May 27: Huracan Buceo 1 Rentistas 1; Juventud 1 Bella Vista P 0*; Defensor 2 Central Espanol 2*; Racing 0 Penarol 1*; River Plate 0 Fenix 3*; Tacuarembo 0 Wanderers 0.
June 1: Bella Vista P 1 Defensor 2; Dep Maldonado 2 Rocha 1*; Racing 1 Danubio 4.
June 2: Rentistas 1 Wanderers 0; Juventud 1 Fenix 3; Nacional 5 River Plate 1*; Central Espanol 1 Huracan Buceo 0*; Tacuarembo 1 Bella Vista M 2; Penarol 3 Cerro 1.
June 8: Dep Maldonado 0 Juventud 0*.
June 9: Tacuarembo 3 Danubio 3; River Plate 1 Racing 1; Defensor 2 Cerro 1; Nacional 2 Wanderers 2; Bella Vista P 1 Rentistas 1.
June 10: Penarol 2 Central Espanol 1*; Huracan Buceo 3 Bella Vista M 5; Rocha 1 Fenix 4.
June 12: Tacuarembo 2 Rentistas 0; Bella Vista P 2 Racing 1.
June 13: Penarol 1 Wanderers 1*; Rocha 1 Danubio 3.
June 14: Fenix 4 Central Espanol 1; Nacional 3 Bella Vista M 1*; Dep Maldonado 0 Cerro 3; Juventud 0 Huracan Buceo 4; River Plate 1 Defensor 1.
June 15: Bella Vista P 2 Tacuarembo 2*.
June 16: Rocha 3 Penarol 2.
June 17: Dep Maldonado 1 Central Espanol 5; Rentistas 2 River Plate 1*; Wanderers 1 Fenix 1; Juventud 0 Nacional 2; Bella Vista M 1 Defensor 3; Cerro 0 Racing 1; Danubio 3 Huracan Buceo 1.

URUGUAY: GROUP A – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	6	4	1	1	13	6	13
Danubio	6	4	1	1	14	9	13
Bella Vista M	6	3	2	1	13	7	11
Cerro	6	2	2	2	10	7	8
Fenix	6	2	1	3	8	9	7
Rentistas	6	2	0	4	5	12	6
River Plate	6	0	1	5	4	17	1

URUGUAY: GROUP B – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Penarol	5	4	1	0	8	3	13
Defensor**	5	2	1	2	10	9	7
Central Espanol**	5	2	1	2	10	9	7
Racing	5	2	1	2	5	7	7
Wanderers	5	1	2	2	9	11	5
Huracan Buceo	5	0	2	3	5	8	2

***Teams had identical records; 2nd and 3rd places decided by drawing lots*

URUGUAY: GROUP C – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventud	4	2	1	1	5	3	7
Bella Vista P	4	1	2	1	3	3	5
Dep Maldonado	4	1	2	1	2	2	5
Tacuarembo	4	1	2	1	4	5	5
Rocha	4	1	1	2	5	6	4

*Only encounters against group rivals (marked *) are included in group standings*

Top two from each group qualified for championship stage

VENEZUELA

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFFS

May 27: Caracas 3 Nacional 0; Carabobo 1 Trujillanos 2; Dep Tachira 0 Ital-Chacao 2; Mineros Guayana 1 FCU-ULA 0; Estudiantes 4 Monagas 1.

VENEZUELA: CH'SHIP PLAY-OFFS – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Caracas	18	10	5	3	34	15	35
Trujillanos	18	9	6	3	24	12	33
Ital-Chacao	18	9	5	4	29	17	32
Estudiantes	18	8	5	5	30	23	29
Dep Tachira	18	7	6	5	13	12	27
Nacional	18	6	3	9	22	26	21
Mineros Guayana	18	5	4	9	20	28	19
FCU-ULA	18	5	3	10	18	33	18
Monagas	18	4	5	9	21	35	17
Carabobo	18	3	6	9	14	24	15

CENTRAL & NORTH AMERICA

UNITED STATES

May 26: Los Angeles Galaxy 2 New England Revolution 0; Chicago Fire 1 San Jose Earthquakes 1; Tampa Bay Mutiny 0 Miami Fusion 4; Columbus Crew 3 Colorado Rapids 3.
May 30: Miami Fusion 2 DC United 1; Chicago Fire 3 Los Angeles Galaxy 4; San Jose Earthquakes 1 Colorado Rapids 1.
June 2: DC United 1 Chicago Fire 2; Columbus Crew 1 Los Angeles Galaxy 1; Tampa Bay Mutiny 1 Kansas City Wizards 2; Dallas Burn 2 Miami Fusion 6; Colorado Rapids 1 San Jose Earthquakes 2.
June 3: New England Revolution 1 MetroStars 1.
June 6: Tampa Bay Mutiny 0 Dallas Burn 1.
June 9: San Jose Earthquakes 3 Los Angeles Galaxy 1; Dallas Burn 3 DC United 0; Miami Fusion 5 Kansas City Wizards 1; New England Revolution 3 Tampa Bay Mutiny 0; Chicago Fire 1 Columbus Crew 0.
June 13: Los Angeles Galaxy 4 Kansas City Wizards 0; DC United 2 MetroStars 1.
June 16: Kansas City Wizards 0 DC United 3; MetroStars 0 San Jose Earthquakes 0; Columbus Crew 6 Tampa Bay Mutiny 1; Miami Fusion 3 Los Angeles Galaxy 3; Colorado Rapids 3 Dallas Burn 6.

USA – EASTERN DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Miami Fusion	13	10	2	1	31	12	32
MetroStars	13	6	3	4	19	16	21
DC United	12	5	0	7	22	21	15
New England	12	4	1	7	13	19	13

USA – CENTRAL DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chicago Fire	11	6	2	3	18	12	20
Dallas Burn	12	6	1	5	24	21	19
Columbus Crew	11	3	4	4	16	18	13
Tampa Bay	13	2	1	10	16	33	7

USA – WESTERN DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Jose	13	7	4	2	21	13	25
LA Galaxy	14	6	4	4	28	24	22
Kansas City	13	5	1	7	15	26	16
Colorado Rapids	13	2	3	8	15	23	9

LEADING GOALSCORERS
10 Diego Serna (Miami Fusion)
8 Abdul Thompson Conteh (DC United)
8 Alex Pineda Chacon (Miami Fusion)
7 Clint Mathis (MetroStars)
7 John Spencer (Colorado Rapids)

AFRICA

2002 NATIONS CUP QUALIFIERS

FINAL STANDINGS

Group 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nigeria*	6	4	2	0	9	1	14
Zambia*	6	2	2	2	5	5	8
Madagascar	6	1	2	3	5	7	5
Namibia	6	1	2	3	5	11	5

Group 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liberia*	6	4	1	1	14	4	13
South Africa*	6	3	3	0	9	4	12
Congo	6	1	2	3	4	9	5
Mauritius	6	0	2	4	2	12	2

Group 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Morocco*	6	3	1	2	5	4	10
Tunisia*	6	2	2	2	9	7	8
Gabon	6	2	2	2	8	8	8
Kenya	6	1	3	2	5	8	6

Group 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Algeria*	6	3	2	1	9	7	11
Burkina Faso*	6	3	2	1	4	3	11
Angola	6	2	2	2	8	7	8
Burundi	6	0	2	4	2	6	2

Group 5

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Togo*	4	3	1	0	7	0	10
Senegal*	4	1	2	1	4	2	5
Uganda	4	0	1	3	1	10	1

Guinea expelled from tournament; results expunged

Group 6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ghana*	6	4	1	1	16	8	13
DR Congo*	6	2	2	2	7	9	8
Lesotho	6	1	3	2	7	9	6
Zimbabwe	6	2	0	4	8	12	6

Group 7

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Egypt*	6	4	1	1	11	6	13
Ivory Coast*	6	3	2	1	9	4	11
Libya	6	2	0	4	4	10	6
Sudan	6	1	1	4	3	7	4

**Qualified for the finals, together with the holders, Cameroon, and the hosts, Mali.*

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

2nd rnd, 2nd legs

May 26: Julius Berger (Nig) 3 SC Villa (Uga) 0 *Julius Berger 3-1 on agg*; St Michel United (Sey) 0 Al Ahly (Egy) 1 *Al Ahly 6-0 on agg*; Esperance (Tun) 1 Tusker (Ken) 0 *Agg 2-2. Esperance on away goals*; Young Africans (Tan) 3 Mamelodi Sundowns (SAf) 3 *Sundowns 6-5 on agg.*
May 27: Belouizdad (Alg) 3 Al Merreikh (Sud) 0 *Belouizdad 3-2 on agg*; Diaraf Dakar (Sen) 2 ASEC Abidjan (IvC) 0 *Agg 2-2. ASEC 3-2 on pens*; Etoile du Congo (Con) 2 Petro Atletico (Ang) 2 *Petro Atletico 6-3 on agg*; Raja Casablanca (Mor) 2 TP Mazembe Englebert (DRC) 1 *TP Mazembe 3-2 on agg.*

CUP-WINNERS CUP

2nd rnd, 2nd legs

May 26: Inter Luanda (Ang) 1 Stade Abidjan (IvC) 0 *Agg 1-1. Inter Luanda 4-2 on pens*; Nkana FC (Zam) 2 Zamalek (Egy) 2 *Zamalek 4-2 on agg.*
May 27: AS Saint Luc (DRC) 1 Club Africain (Tun) 1 *Club Africain 3-1 on agg*; Coffee FC (Eth) 0 Kumbo Strikers (Cam) 0 *Kumbo Strikers 1-0 on agg*; Evico (Gab) 2 Royal Armed Forces (Mor) 0 *Agg 3-3. Evico on away goals*; Kaizer Chiefs (SAf) 3 Sunshine SC (Sey) 0 *Kaizer Chiefs 5-0 on agg*; Niger Tornadoes (Nig) 2 CR Ben Tour (Alg) 0 *Niger Tornadoes 2-1 on agg.*
May 29: Simba SC (Tan) 1 Ismaili (Egy) 0 *Ismaili 2-1 on agg.*

CAF CUP

2nd rnd, 2nd legs

May 26: ASC Ndiambour (Sen) 0 Wydad Casablanca (Mor) 2 *Wydad Casablanca 3-1 on agg.*
May 27: Africa Sports (IvC) 1 Mouloudia Constantine (Alg) 0 *Agg 1-1. Africa Sports 5-4 on pens*; AS Aviacao (Ang) 2 Goldfields (Gha) 2 *Goldfields 3-2 on agg*; EELPA (Eth) 1 JS Kabylie (Alg) 0 *JS Kabylie 2-1 on agg*; Green Mamba (Swa) 0 Ferroviario Maputo (Moz) 2 *Ferroviario 4-0 on agg*; Oserian Fastac (Ken) 4 Etoile Sahel (Tun) 2 *Agg 4-4. Etoile Sahel on away goals*; SM Sanga Balende (DRC) 2 Cotonsport (Cam) 2 *Cotonsport 4-2 on agg.*

Ajax Cape Town (SAf) v Katsina United (Nig) – Katsina did not arrive for second leg; Ajax walkover

ASIA

JAPAN

FIRST STAGE

June 16: Consadole Sapporo 2 Nagoya Grampus Eight 2; Kashiwa Reysol 0 Jubilo Iwata 1; Yokohama F Marinos 0 FC Tokyo 2; Vissel Kobe 1 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 0; Shimizu S-Pulse 1 Urawa Reds 0 (aet); Tokyo Verdy 1969 2 Cerezo Osaka 1; Gamba Osaka 3 JEF United Ichihara 4 (aet); Avispa Fukuoka 0 Kashima Antlers 2.

JAPAN – FIRST STAGE

	P	W1	W2	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jubilo Iwata	11	9	1	0	1	24	7	29
Shimizu S-Pulse	10	4	4	0	2	18	10	20
JEF United	11	5	2	0	4	25	19	19
Grampus Eight	10	3	3	2	2	16	13	17
Consadole Sapp	11	5	0	2	4	15	15	17
Vissel Kobe	11	4	1	1	5	11	14	15
FC Tokyo	11	4	1	0	6	12	15	14
Avispa Fukuoka	11	4	1	0	6	12	16	14
Kashiwa Reysol	11	3	2	0	6	19	17	13
Sanfrecce H	11	3	2	0	6	19	19	13
Gamba Osaka	11	3	2	0	6	16	19	13
Kashima Antlers	11	3	1	1	6	16	18	12
Urawa Reds	11	3	1	1	6	14	17	12
Yokohama FM	11	3	0	1	7	10	16	10
Cerezo Osaka	11	2	0	2	7	15	20	8
Tokyo Verdy 1969	11	2	1	0	8	14	21	8

W1 = win in 90mins – 3pts; W2 = win in extra time – 2pts; Draw = 1pt

QUALIFYING UPDATE

AFRICA

5 teams qualify

SECOND ROUND

Group A

Angola, Cameroon, Libya, Togo, Zambia

18.06.00.....Angola-Zambia 2-1
18.06.00.....Libya-Cameroon 0-3
08.07.00.....Zambia-Togo.....2-0
09.07.00.....Cameroon-Angola.....3-0
28.01.01.....Angola-Libya.....3-1
28.01.01.....Togo-Cameroon 0-2
23.02.01.....Libya-Togo 3-3
25.02.01.....Cameroon-Zambia 1-0
10.03.01.....Zambia-Libya 2-0
11.03.01.....Togo-Angola.....1-1
21.04.01.....Zambia-Angola 1-1
22.04.01.....Cameroon-Libya 1-0
06.05.01.....Angola-Cameroon.....2-0
06.05.01.....Togo-Zambia.....3-2
29.06.01.....Libya-Angola
01.07.01.....Cameroon-Togo
14.07.01.....Zambia-Cameroon
15.07.01.....Togo-Libya
27-29.07.01 ....Angola-Togo
27-29.07.01 ....Libya-Zambia

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cameroon	6	5	0	1	10	2	15
Angola	6	3	2	1	9	7	11
Zambia	6	2	1	3	8	7	7
Togo	5	1	2	2	7	10	5
Libya	5	0	1	4	4	12	1

Group B

Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan

17.06.00.....Nigeria-Sierra Leone 2-0
18.06.00.....Sudan-Liberia 2-0
09.07.00.....Ghana-Sierra Leone.....5-0
09.07.00.....Liberia-Nigeria.....2-1
27.01.01.....Nigeria-Sudan.....3-0
28.01.01.....Ghana-Liberia 1-3
25.02.01.....Liberia-Sierra Leone 1-0
25.02.01.....Sudan-Ghana.....1-0
09.03.01.....Ghana-Nigeria.....0-0
10.03.01.....Sierra Leone-Sudan 0-2
21.04.01.....Sierra Leone-Nigeria 1-0
22.04.01.....Liberia-Sudan 2-0
05.05.01.....Nigeria-Liberia.....2-0
05.05.01.....Sierra Leone-Ghana.....1-1
01.07.01.....Liberia-Ghana
01.07.01.....Sudan-Nigeria
14.07.01.....Sierra Leone-Liberia
15.07.01.....Ghana-Sudan
20.07.01.....Nigeria-Ghana
20.07.01.....Sudan-Sierra Leone

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liberia	6	4	0	2	8	6	12
Nigeria	6	3	1	2	8	3	10
Sudan	5	3	0	2	5	5	9
Ghana	5	1	2	2	7	5	5
Sierra Leone	6	1	1	4	2	11	4

Group C

Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Namibia, Senegal

16.06.00.....Algeria-Senegal 1-1
17.06.00.....Namibia-Morocco 0-0
09.07.00.....Morocco-Algeria 2-1
09.07.00.....Senegal-Egypt 0-0
26.01.01.....Algeria-Namibia.....1-0
28.01.01.....Egypt-Morocco.....0-0
24.02.01.....Morocco-Senegal.....0-0
24.02.01.....Namibia-Egypt 1-1
10.03.01.....Senegal-Namibia 4-0
11.03.01.....Egypt-Algeria 5-2
21.04.01.....Morocco-Namibia 3-0
21.04.01.....Senegal-Algeria 3-0
04.05.01.....Algeria-Morocco 1-2
06.05.01.....Egypt-Senegal 1-0
30.06.01.....Morocco-Egypt
30.06.01.....Namibia-Algeria
13.07.01.....Egypt-Namibia
14.07.01.....Senegal-Morocco
20.07.01.....Algeria-Egypt
20.07.01.....Namibia-Senegal

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Morocco	6	3	3	0	7	2	12
Senegal	6	2	3	1	8	2	9
Egypt	5	2	3	0	7	3	9
Algeria	6	1	1	4	6	13	4
Namibia	5	0	2	3	1	9	2

Group D

Congo, DR Congo, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Tunisia

18.06.00 .....Ivory Coast-Tunisia 2-2
18.06.00 .....Madagascar-DR Congo.....3-0
08.07.00.....Tunisia-Madagascar.....1-0
09.07.00.....DR Congo-Congo 2-0
28.01.01.....Congo-Tunisia 1-2
28.01.01.....Madagascar-Ivory Coast 1-3
25.02.01.....Ivory Coast-Congo.....Postponed
25.02.01.....Tunisia-DR Congo.....6-0
10.03.01.....DR Congo-Ivory Coast.....1-2
11.03.01.....Congo-Madagascar.....Postponed
22.04.01.....DR Congo-Madagascar.....1-0
22.04.01.....Ivory Coast-Congo 2-0
27.04.01.....Congo-Madagascar 2-0
05.05.01.....Madagascar-Tunisia.....0-2
06.05.01.....Congo-DR Congo 1-1
20.05.01.....Tunisia-Ivory Coast.....1-1
01.07.01.....Ivory Coast-Madagascar
01.07.01.....Tunisia-Congo
15.07.01.....Congo-Ivory Coast
15.07.01.....DR Congo-Tunisia
27-29.07.01 ...Ivory Coast-DR Congo
27-29.07.01 ...Madagascar-Congo

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tunisia	6	4	2	0	14	4	14
Ivory Coast	5	3	2	0	10	5	11
DR Congo	6	2	1	3	5	12	7
Congo	5	1	1	3	4	7	4
Madagascar	6	1	0	5	4	9	3

Group E

Burkina Faso, Guinea (expelled), Malawi, South Africa, Zimbabwe

17.06.00 .....Malawi-Burkina Faso.....1-1
18.06.00 .....Guinea-Zimbabwe..... (annulled) 3-0
09.07.00 .....Burkina Faso-Guinea .. (annulled) 2-3
09.07.00 .....Zimbabwe-South Africa*.....0-2
27.01.01 .....South Africa-Burkina Faso.....1-0
28.01.01 .....Guinea-Malawi .....(annulled) 1-1
24.02.01 .....Burkina Faso-Zimbabwe.....1-2
25.02.01 .....Malawi-South Africa 1-2
11.03.01 .....Zimbabwe-Malawi 2-0
21.04.01 .....Burkina Faso-Malawi 4-2
05.05.01 .....South Africa-Zimbabwe 2-1
01.07.01 .....Burkina Faso-South Africa
14.07.01 .....South Africa-Malawi
15.07.01 .....Zimbabwe-Burkina Faso
27-29.07.01 ....Malawi-Zimbabwe
**Match abandoned after 82 minutes; result stood*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Africa	4	4	0	0	7	2	12
Zimbabwe	4	2	0	2	5	5	6
Burkina Faso	4	1	1	2	6	6	4
Malawi	4	0	1	3	4	9	1

Guinea expelled; results expunged

The five group winners qualify for the finals.

Results from the First Round of qualifying will be printed in future issues.

ASIA

Top duo meet again

THE draw for the two-group second phase of the region's qualifying section has presented a case of deja vu, as Middle Eastern heavyweights **Saudi Arabia** and **Iran** were pooled together.

Easier draw...China's Milutinovic

The pair took the top two positions in their respective group in the France 98 qualifiers, with the winners, Saudi Arabia, going through automatically and runners-up Iran eventually reaching the finals after losing to Japan in Asia's third-place play-off and then defeating Australia on away goals to take the continent's allotted 'half' place.

This time around the pair will face off in Group A against **Thailand**, **Bahrain** and **Iraq**.

The fact that Iran and Saudi Arabia were drawn together resulted from the Asian Football Confederation's controversial decision to make the Saudis and the **United Arab Emirates** top seeds.

Iran's qualification for France 98 had raised expectations that they would be seeded, but the AFC decided to use the results from World Cup qualifying tournaments as far back as Italia 90 to determine which countries would be most favoured in the draw.

This meant the Emirates emerged with a higher ranking than the Iranians.

The fact that the Saudis and Iranians have been drawn together means that **China's** prospects of reaching their first World Cup finals have improved.

Bora Milutinovic's side have been pooled in Group B with the UAE (who struggled to reach the second round against less-than-impressive opponents India and Yemen), **Qatar**, **Uzbekistan** and **Oman**.

"This group is better than the other one," said Milutinovic, who has led Mexico, Costa Rica, the United States and Nigeria to previous finals. "The travelling is difficult, but it is not a big problem."

Despite UAE's seeded status, China's toughest opponents should be Qatar, who came within one win of qualifying for France 98 at the expense of Saudi Arabia.

Michael Church

2 or 3 teams qualify, plus hosts Japan and South Korea

FIRST ROUND

Group 1

Laos, Oman, Philippines, Syria

30.04.01.....Oman-Laos 12-0
30.04.01.....Syria-Philippines 12-0
04.05.01.....Laos-Oman*.....0-7
04.05.01.....Philippines-Syria 1-5
07.05.01.....Oman-Philippines 7-0
07.05.01.....Syria-Laos 11-0
11.05.01.....Laos-Syria** 0-9
11.05.01.....Philippines-Oman*.....0-2
18.05.01.....Syria-Oman 3-3
19.05.01.....Laos-Philippines.....2-0
25.05.01.....Oman-Syria 2-0
26.05.01.....Philippines-Laos.....1-1
Ties played on a home and away basis
**Played in Muscat; Laos and Philippines waived right to stage game. **Played in Aleppo; Laos waived right to stage game*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oman*	6	5	1	0	33	3	16
Syria	6	4	1	1	40	6	13
Laos	6	1	1	4	3	40	4
Philippines	6	0	1	5	2	29	1

Group 2

Guam, Iran, Myanmar (withdrew), Tajikistan

24.11.00.....Iran-Guam 19-0
26.11.00.....Tajikistan-Guam 16-0
28.11.00.....Iran-Tajikistan 2-0
All ties played in Tabriz, Iran

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran*	2	2	0	0	21	0	6
Tajikistan	2	1	0	1	16	2	3
Guam	2	0	0	2	0	35	0

Group 3

Hong Kong, Malaysia, Palestine, Qatar

04.03.01.....Qatar-Malaysia 5-1
04.03.01.....Hong Kong-Palestine.....1-1
08.03.01.....Palestine-Qatar.....1-2
08.03.01.....Malaysia-Hong Kong 2-0
11.03.01.....Palestine-Malaysia 1-0
11.03.01.....Qatar-Hong Kong.....2-0
Ties played in Hong Kong

20.03.01.....Palestine-Hong Kong.....1-0
20.03.01.....Malaysia-Qatar 0-0
23.03.01.....Qatar-Palestine.....2-1
23.03.01.....Hong Kong-Malaysia 2-1
25.03.01.....Hong Kong-Qatar.....0-3
25.03.01.....Malaysia-Palestine 4-3
Ties played in Doha, Qatar

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Qatar*	6	5	1	0	14	3	16
Palestine	6	2	1	3	8	9	7
Malaysia	6	2	1	3	8	11	7
Hong Kong	6	1	1	4	3	10	4

Group 4

Bahrain, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Singapore

03.02.01.....Bahrain-Kuwait.....1-2
03.02.01.....Singapore-Kyrgyzstan 0-1
06.02.01.....Bahrain-Kyrgyzstan 1-0
06.02.01.....Kuwait-Singapore.....1-1
09.02.01.....Kyrgyzstan-Kuwait 0-3
09.02.01.....Singapore-Bahrain 1-2
Ties played in Singapore

21.02.01.....Kyrgyzstan-Bahrain 1-2
21.02.01.....Singapore-Kuwait.....0-1
24.02.01.....Kuwait-Kyrgyzstan 2-0
24.02.01.....Bahrain-Singapore 2-0

27.02.01.....Kyrgyzstan-Singapore.....1-1
27.02.01.....Kuwait-Bahrain.....0-1
Ties played in Kuwait City

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bahrain*	6	5	0	1	9	4	15
Kuwait	6	4	1	1	9	3	13
Kyrgyzstan	6	1	1	4	3	9	4
Singapore	6	0	2	4	3	8	2

Group 5

Lebanon, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand

13.05.01.....Thailand-Sri Lanka.....4-2
13.05.01.....Lebanon-Pakistan.....6-0
15.05.01.....Thailand-Pakistan.....3-0
15.05.01.....Lebanon-Sri Lanka.....4-0
17.05.01.....Pakistan-Sri Lanka.....3-3
17.05.01.....Lebanon-Thailand.....1-2
Ties played in Beirut, Lebanon

26.05.01.....Pakistan-Lebanon.....1-8
26.05.01.....Sri Lanka-Thailand.....0-3
28.05.01.....Sri Lanka-Lebanon.....0-5
28.05.01.....Pakistan-Thailand.....0-6
30.05.01.....Sri Lanka-Pakistan.....3-1
30.05.01.....Thailand-Lebanon.....2-2
Ties played in Bangkok, Thailand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Thailand*	6	5	1	0	20	5	16
Lebanon	6	4	1	1	26	5	13
Sri Lanka	6	1	1	4	8	20	4
Pakistan	6	0	1	5	5	29	1

Group 6

Iraq, Kazakhstan, Macao, Nepal

12.04.01.....Nepal-Kazakhstan.....0-6
12.04.01.....Iraq-Macao.....8-0
14.04.01.....Kazakhstan-Macao.....3-0
14.04.01.....Nepal-Iraq.....1-9
16.04.01.....Nepal-Macao.....4-1
16.04.01.....Kazakhstan-Iraq.....1-1
Ties played in Baghdad, Iraq

21.04.01.....Kazakhstan-Nepal.....4-0
21.04.01.....Macao-Iraq.....0-5
23.04.01.....Macao-Kazakhstan.....0-5
23.04.01.....Iraq-Nepal.....4-2
25.04.01.....Macao-Nepal.....1-6
25.04.01.....Iraq-Kazakhstan.....1-1
Ties played in Almaty, Kazakhstan

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iraq*	6	4	2	0	28	5	14
Kazakhstan	6	4	2	0	20	2	14
Nepal	6	2	0	4	13	25	6
Macao	6	0	0	6	2	31	0

Group 7

Uzbekistan, Jordan, Turkmenistan, Taiwan

23.04.01.....Turkmenistan-Jordan.....2-0
23.04.01.....Uzbekistan-Taiwan.....7-0
25.04.01.....Taiwan-Jordan.....0-2
25.04.01.....Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan.....1-0
27.04.01.....Taiwan-Turkmenistan.....0-5
27.04.01.....Uzbekistan-Jordan.....2-2
Ties played in Tashkent, Uzbekistan

03.05.01.....Jordan-Taiwan.....6-0
03.05.01.....Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan.....2-5
05.05.01.....Taiwan-Uzbekistan.....0-4
05.05.01.....Jordan-Turkmenistan.....1-2
07.05.01.....Turkmenistan-Taiwan.....1-0
07.05.01.....Jordan-Uzbekistan.....1-1
Ties played in Amman, Jordan

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uzbekistan*	6	4	2	0	20	5	14
Turkmenistan	6	4	0	2	12	7	12
Jordan	6	2	2	2	12	7	8
Taiwan	6	0	0	6	0	25	0

Group 8

Brunei, India, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

07.04.01.....Brunei-Yemen.....0-5
08.04.01.....India-United Arab Emirates.....1-0
14.04.01.....Brunei-United Arab Emirates.....0-12
15.04.01.....India-Yemen.....1-1
26.04.01.....United Arab Emirates-India.....1-0
27.04.01.....Yemen-Brunei.....1-0
04.05.01.....United Arab Emirates-Brunei.....4-0
04.05.01.....Yemen-India.....3-3
11.05.01.....Yemen-United Arab Emirates.....2-1
12.05.01.....Brunei-India.....0-1
18.05.01.....United Arab Emirates-Yemen.....3-2
20.05.01.....India-Brunei.....5-0
Ties played on a home and away basis

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
UAE*	6	4	0	2	21	5	12
Yemen	6	3	2	1	14	8	11
India	6	3	2	1	11	5	11
Brunei	6	0	0	6	0	28	0

Group 9

Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Maldives

01.04.01.....Maldives-Cambodia.....6-0
08.04.01.....Indonesia-Maldives.....5-0
15.04.01.....Cambodia-Maldives.....1-1
22.04.01.....China-Maldives.....10-1
22.04.01.....Indonesia-Cambodia.....6-0
28.04.01.....Maldives-China.....0-1
29.04.01.....Cambodia-Indonesia.....0-2
06.05.01.....Cambodia-China.....0-4
06.05.01.....Maldives-Indonesia.....0-2
13.05.01.....China-Indonesia.....5-1
20.05.01.....China-Cambodia.....3-1
27.05.01.....Indonesia-China.....0-2
Ties played on a home and away basis

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
China*	6	6	0	0	25	3	18
Indonesia	6	4	0	2	16	7	12
Maldives	6	1	1	4	8	19	4
Cambodia	6	0	1	5	2	22	1

Group 10

Bangladesh, Mongolia, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam

08.02.01.....Vietnam-Bangladesh.....0-0
08.02.01.....Saudi Arabia-Mongolia.....6-0
10.02.01.....Mongolia-Vietnam.....0-1
10.02.01.....Bangladesh-Saudi Arabia.....0-3
12.02.01.....Mongolia-Bangladesh.....0-3
12.02.01.....Saudi Arabia-Vietnam.....5-0
15.02.01.....Mongolia-Saudi Arabia.....0-6
15.02.01.....Bangladesh-Vietnam.....0-4
17.02.01.....Vietnam-Mongolia.....4-0
17.02.01.....Saudi Arabia-Bangladesh.....6-0
19.02.01.....Bangladesh-Mongolia.....2-2
19.02.01.....Vietnam-Saudi Arabia.....0-4
All ties played in Dammam, Saudi Arabia

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Saudi Arabia*	6	6	0	0	30	0	18
Vietnam	6	3	1	2	9	9	10
Bangladesh	6	1	2	3	5	15	5
Mongolia	6	0	1	5	2	22	1

**Qualified for second round.*

SECOND ROUND

Group A

Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Thailand

17.08.01.....Iraq-Thailand
17.08.01.....Saudi Arabia-Bahrain
23.08.01.....Bahrain-Iraq
24.08.01.....Iran-Saudi Arabia
31.08.01.....Saudi Arabia-Iraq
01.09.01.....Thailand-Iran
06.09.01.....Bahrain-Thailand
07.09.01.....Iraq-Iran
14.09.01.....Iran-Bahrain
15.09.01.....Thailand-Saudi Arabia
21.09.01.....Bahrain-Saudi Arabia
22.09.01.....Thailand-Iraq
28.09.01.....Iraq-Bahrain
28.09.01.....Saudi Arabia-Iran
05.10.01.....Iran-Thailand
05.10.01.....Iraq-Saudi Arabia
12.10.01.....Iran-Iraq
13.10.01.....Thailand-Bahrain
19.10.01.....Bahrain-Iran
19.10.01.....Saudi Arabia-Thailand

Group B

China, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan

16.08.01.....Qatar-Oman
17.08.01.....United Arab Emirates-Uzbekistan
25.08.01.....China-United Arab Emirates
26.08.01.....Uzbekistan-Qatar
31.08.01.....United Arab Emirates-Qatar
31.08.01.....Oman-China
07.09.01.....Qatar-China
08.09.01.....Uzbekistan-Oman
14.09.01.....Oman-United Arab Emirates
15.09.01.....China-Uzbekistan
21.09.01.....Oman-Qatar
22.09.01.....Uzbekistan-United Arab Emirates
27.09.01.....United Arab Emirates-China
28.09.01.....Qatar-Uzbekistan
04.10.01.....Qatar-United Arab Emirates
07.10.01.....China-Oman
13.10.01.....Oman-Uzbekistan
13.10.01.....China-Qatar
19.10.01.....United Arab Emirates-Oman
19.10.01.....Uzbekistan-China

Ties to be played on a home and away basis. The two group winners qualify directly for the finals. The two runners-up play-off home and away, the winners going on to meet a European group runner-up in a play-off. The winners of that tie also qualify for the finals.

EUROPE

Big guns close in

THERE are still no confirmed qualifiers for the finals from the region, but Russia, Poland, Italy and Germany have emerged as the safest bets to go through following the latest matches.

Italy beat **Georgia** 2-1 away in their only game during June, and despite closest Group 8 challengers Romania winning twice, Giovanni Trapattoni's men need only two points from their remaining two games to make sure of their passage.

Roma duo Marco Delvecchio and Francesco Totti put Italy 2-0 up in Tbilisi, and though Georgi Gakhokidze pulled one goal back late on, the *Azzurri* had done enough to take the three points.

Romania overcame a late surge of pressure from **Lithuania** to secure a 2-1 win in Kaunas, having beaten **Hungary** 2-0 in Bucharest four days earlier. The six points kept the team on course for the play-off spot, though coach Ladislau Boloni resigned shortly after the games to join Sporting Lisbon.

Germany now need only a point at home to England in their next Group 9 match, in September, to qualify for the finals, having drawn with **Finland** and beaten **Albania**, both away. The game in Helsinki proved problematic for Rudi Voller's side, and they were behind to two Mikael Forssell goals at half-time. But a Michael Ballack penalty in the 69th minute, followed by a Carsten Jancker strike three minutes later, earned Germany a point.

Ballack was on target again four days later in Tirana, this time from open play. His second-half goal gave the side a relatively comfortable 2-0 victory, Marko Rehmer having got the first just before the half-hour mark from close range.

Yet despite being so close to qualification, Germany must keep an eye on a resurgent **England**. Their impressive 2-0 win away to **Greece** in Athens gave Sven Goran Eriksson his fifth consecutive win since taking charge of the team – a record start for an England manager – and kept the side in with at least a chance of taking top spot in Group 9.

Paul Scholes stabbed home from close range in the 64th minute to give

Man in the middle...Italy's Del Piero is surrounded against Georgia

England a deserved lead, and the game was wrapped up by David Beckham, whose whipped free-kick left keeper Antonis Nikopolidis rooted to his line.

Should England win all their remaining three games – including that tie in Germany – the group is likely to be decided by the head-to-head record of the two sides.

Poland could have been even closer to the World Cup finals had they not been held to a 1-1 draw away to **Armenia**. The goals came early in the first half – Radoslaw Kaluzny for the visitors after four minutes, with Artur Petrosyan equalising seven minutes later – but the real fireworks came at the end of the game.

Armenia had already had Albert Sarkisyan sent off when a mass brawl led to the home side finishing the match with just eight players. Feliks Khodzhoyan and Haik Gevorgyan were both dismissed for their part in the flare-up, along with Poland's Jacek Bak.

Yet despite dropping two points in Yerevan, Poland are still odds on to finish top of Group 5, having come from behind to beat **Wales** 2-1 in Cardiff four days earlier. Their qualification prospects were also given a boost by the inability of closest challengers **Belarus** and **Ukraine** to record a win in their two recent games. Ukraine could only draw at home to **Norway** and Wales, while Belarus also had to settle for just a point from each of their ties, away to Armenia and Norway.

The latter result meant that the Norwegians became the first of the European qualifiers for France 98 to be eliminated this time round. Belarus or Ukraine will collect at least 13 points overall, equal to the highest total Norway can achieve. And both the Eastern European nations have a better head-to-head record against Nils Johan Semb's side – the determining factor for ranking teams that finish with the same number of points.

In Group 1, **Russia** only drew 1-1 at home to **Yugoslavia** and beat **Luxembourg** by just 2-1 away, but with games beginning to run out hold a four-point lead over second-placed **Slovenia**.

The latter enjoyed two victories in June – 2-0 at home to Luxembourg, 1-0 away to **Switzerland** – to boost their chances of qualifying for their second consecutive major championship. The win in Basle, courtesy of a late goal by substitute Sebastjan Cimerotic, allowed them to leapfrog the Swiss, who nevertheless remain in contention for a play-off berth.

Yugoslavia are not out of the picture, either, and boosted their goal difference with a 6-0 drubbing of the **Faroe Islands** in Toftir.

The battle for top spot in the other five groups looks like being a much tighter affair. The **Republic of Ireland** hold sway in Group 2 for the time being following their 2-0 win away to **Estonia**. However, they have played a game more than **Portugal**, three points behind in second, and Holland, a further point back.

An entertaining top-of-the-table clash in Dublin ended 1-1, with Luis Figo cancelling out Roy Keane's deflected goal with 11 minutes remaining.

On the same day, **Holland** had a narrow escape in Tallinn having trailed Estonia 2-1 with just four minutes to play. However, two goals from Ruud Van Nistelrooy and one from Patrick Kluivert brought the Dutch their much-needed three points.

Only one point separates the top three in Group 4, with **Denmark**, still unbeaten, in pole position after two 2-1 wins. They left it late in both games, Jon Dahl Tomasson heading the winner at home to former leaders the **Czech Republic** with just eight minutes remaining, and Ebbe Sand saving the embarrassment of being held by **Malta** with only seven left on the clock.

Bulgaria, now joint second with the Czech Republic, missed their chance to go top when they could only draw 1-1 away to **Iceland** in Reykjavik.

Sweden enjoyed two home wins to leap from third place to first in Group 4. Henrik Larsson rounded off his prolific season with four goals – three of them penalties – in the 6-0 destruction of **Moldova** in Gothenburg. Four days earlier, Marcus Allback had scored both Sweden's goals in the 2-0 win over **Slovakia** in Stockholm.

The latter result, coupled with a shock 2-0 loss in **Azerbaijan**, means that former group leaders Slovakia are now four points adrift of **Turkey**, still occupying the runners-up spot.

The Turks could have gone joint top with Sweden by beating **Macedonia** at home. But they had to rely on an unlikely hat-trick from central defender Alpay Ozalan to rescue even a point, having been 2-0 down at one stage.

Belgium and **Croatia** took advantage of **Scotland's** lack of activity during June to go first and second respectively in Group 6. Marc Wilmots scored three times to help Belgium to their two recent wins, 3-1 over **Latvia** at home, 4-1 away to **San Marino**. Bosko Balaban was fulfilling a similar role for Croatia, hitting one of his side's haul of four goals in the home win over the *Sammarinesi*, and the only goal away to Latvia.

In Group 7, **Spain's** inability to beat **Israel** in Tel Aviv means that **Austria**, who did not play in June, can go level at the top if they beat Spain in Valencia in September. Conversely, a win for the Spaniards in that tie would book their ticket for Japan/South Korea.

While there are no assured European qualifiers to date, the list of those definitely not going to the finals received a number of additions after the June games. As well as Norway, the absentees will certainly include Luxembourg, Andorra, Northern Ireland, Malta, Macedonia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Latvia, San Marino, Liechtenstein, Lithuania and Albania.

Michael Bowesfield

13 or 14 teams qualify, plus holders France

Group 1

Faroe Islands, Luxembourg, Russia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Yugoslavia

02.09.00 .....Switzerland-Russia 0-1
03.09.00 .....Faroe Islands-Slovenia 2-2
03.09.00 .....Luxembourg-Yugoslavia 0-2
07.10.00 .....Luxembourg-Slovenia 1-2
07.10.00 .....Switzerland-Faroe Islands 5-1
07.10.00 .....Yugoslavia-Russia .....Postponed
11.10.00 .....Russia-Luxembourg 3-0
11.10.00 .....Slovenia-Switzerland 2-2
11.10.00 .....Yugoslavia-Faroe Islands...Postponed
24.03.01 .....Luxembourg-Faroe Islands 0-2
24.03.01 .....Russia-Slovenia 1-1
24.03.01 .....Yugoslavia-Switzerland 1-1
28.03.01 .....Russia-Faroe Islands 1-0
28.03.01 .....Slovenia-Yugoslavia 1-1
28.03.01 .....Switzerland-Luxembourg 5-0
25.04.01 .....Yugoslavia-Russia 0-1
02.06.01 .....Faroe Islands-Switzerland 0-1
02.06.01 .....Russia-Yugoslavia 1-1
02.06.01 .....Slovenia-Luxembourg 2-0
06.06.01 .....Faroe Islands-Yugoslavia 0-6
06.06.01 .....Luxembourg-Russia 1-2
06.06.01 .....Switzerland-Slovenia 0-1
15.08.01 .....Yugoslavia-Faroe Islands
01.09.01 .....Faroe Islands-Luxembourg
01.09.01 .....Slovenia-Russia
01.09.01 .....Switzerland-Yugoslavia
05.09.01 .....Faroe Islands-Russia
05.09.01 .....Luxembourg-Switzerland
05.09.01 .....Yugoslavia-Slovenia
06/07.10.01 ....Russia-Switzerland
06/07.10.01 ....Slovenia-Faroe Islands
06/07.10.01 ....Yugoslavia-Luxembourg

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Russia	7	5	2	0	10	3	17
Slovenia	7	3	4	0	11	7	13
Switzerland	7	3	2	2	14	6	11
Yugoslavia	6	2	3	1	11	4	9
Faroe Islands	6	1	1	4	5	15	4
Luxembourg	7	0	0	7	2	18	0

Group 2

Andorra, Cyprus, Estonia, Holland, Portugal, Republic of Ireland

16.08.00.....Estonia-Andorra.....1-0
02.09.00.....Andorra-Cyprus 2-3
02.09.00.....Holland-Rep of Ireland.....2-2
03.09.00.....Estonia-Portugal.....1-3
07.10.00.....Andorra-Estonia.....1-2
07.10.00.....Cyprus-Holland.....0-4
07.10.00.....Portugal-Rep of Ireland 1-1
11.10.00.....Holland-Portugal.....0-2
11.10.00.....Rep of Ireland-Estonia.....2-0
15.11.00.....Cyprus-Andorra 5-0
28.02.01.....Portugal-Andorra.....3-0
24.03.01.....Andorra-Holland 0-5
24.03.01.....Cyprus-Rep of Ireland.....0-4
28.03.01.....Andorra-Rep of Ireland 0-3
28.03.01.....Cyprus-Estonia 2-2
28.03.01.....Portugal-Holland.....2-2
25.04.01.....Holland-Cyprus.....4-0
25.04.01.....Rep of Ireland-Andorra.....3-1
02.06.01.....Estonia-Holland 2-4
02.06.01.....Rep of Ireland-Portugal 1-1
06.06.01.....Estonia-Rep of Ireland.....0-2
06.06.01.....Portugal-Cyprus.....6-0
15.08.01.....Estonia-Cyprus
01.09.01.....Andorra-Portugal
01.09.01.....Rep of Ireland-Holland
05.09.01.....Cyprus-Portugal
05.09.01.....Holland-Estonia
06.10.01.....Holland-Andorra
06.10.01.....Portugal-Estonia
06.10.01.....Rep of Ireland-Cyprus

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rep of Ireland	8	5	3	0	18	5	18
Portugal	7	4	3	0	18	5	15
Holland	7	4	2	1	21	8	14
Estonia	7	2	1	4	8	14	7
Cyprus	7	2	1	4	10	22	7
Andorra	8	0	0	8	4	25	0

Group 3

Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Iceland, Malta, Northern Ireland

02.09.00.....Bulgaria-Czech Republic 0-1
02.09.00.....Iceland-Denmark.....1-2
02.09.00.....Northern Ireland-Malta.....1-0
07.10.00.....Bulgaria-Malta.....3-0
07.10.00.....Czech Republic-Iceland.....4-0
07.10.00.....Northern Ireland-Denmark 1-1
11.10.00.....Denmark-Bulgaria 1-1
11.10.00.....Iceland-Northern Ireland 1-0
11.10.00.....Malta-Czech Republic 0-0
24.03.01.....Bulgaria-Iceland 2-1
24.03.01.....Malta-Denmark 0-5
24.03.01.....Northern Ireland-Czech Republic ...0-1
28.03.01.....Bulgaria-Northern Ireland.....4-3
28.03.01.....Czech Republic-Denmark.....0-0
25.04.01.....Malta-Iceland 1-4
02.06.01.....Denmark-Czech Republic.....2-1
02.06.01.....Iceland-Malta 3-0
02.06.01.....Northern Ireland-Bulgaria.....0-1
06.06.01.....Czech Republic-Northern Ireland ...3-1
06.06.01.....Denmark-Malta 2-1
06.06.01.....Iceland-Bulgaria 1-1
01.09.01.....Denmark-Northern Ireland
01.09.01.....Iceland-Czech Republic
01.09.01.....Malta-Bulgaria
05.09.01.....Bulgaria-Denmark
05.09.01.....Czech Republic-Malta
05.09.01.....Northern Ireland-Iceland
06.10.01.....Czech Republic-Bulgaria
06.10.01.....Denmark-Iceland
06.10.01.....Malta-Northern Ireland

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Denmark	7	4	3	0	13	5	15
Czech Republic	7	4	2	1	10	3	14
Bulgaria	7	4	2	1	12	7	14
Iceland	7	3	1	3	11	10	10
Northern Ireland	7	1	1	5	6	11	4
Malta	7	0	1	6	2	18	1

Group 4

Azerbaijan, Macedonia, Moldova, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey

02.09.00 .....Azerbaijan-Sweden.....0-1
02.09.00 .....Turkey-Moldova.....2-0
03.09.00 .....Slovakia-Macedonia 2-0
06.10.00 .....Macedonia-Azerbaijan 3-0
07.10.00 .....Moldova-Slovakia 0-1
07.10.00 .....Sweden-Turkey.....1-1
11.10.00 .....Azerbaijan-Turkey.....0-1
11.10.00 .....Moldova-Macedonia 0-0
11.10.00 .....Slovakia-Sweden 0-0
24.03.01 .....Azerbaijan-Moldova 0-0
24.03.01 .....Sweden-Macedonia 1-0
24.03.01 .....Turkey-Slovakia 1-1
28.03.01 .....Macedonia-Turkey 1-2
28.03.01 .....Moldova-Sweden 0-2
28.03.01 .....Slovakia-Azerbaijan 3-1
02.06.01 .....Macedonia-Moldova 2-2
02.06.01 .....Sweden-Slovakia 2-0
02.06.01 .....Turkey-Azerbaijan.....3-0
06.06.01 .....Azerbaijan-Slovakia 2-0
06.06.01 .....Sweden-Moldova 6-0
06.06.01 .....Turkey-Macedonia 3-3
01.09.01 .....Macedonia-Sweden
01.09.01 .....Moldova-Azerbaijan
01.09.01 .....Slovakia-Turkey

05.09.01 .....Azerbaijan-Macedonia
05.09.01 .....Slovakia-Moldova
05.09.01 .....Turkey-Sweden
07.10.01 .....Macedonia-Slovakia
07.10.01 .....Moldova-Turkey
07.10.01 .....Sweden-Azerbaijan

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	7	5	2	0	13	1	17
Turkey	7	4	3	0	13	6	15
Slovakia	7	3	2	2	7	6	11
Macedonia	7	1	3	3	9	10	6
Azerbaijan	7	1	1	5	3	11	4
Moldova	7	0	3	4	2	13	3

Group 5

Armenia, Belarus, Norway, Poland, Ukraine, Wales

02.09.00 .....Belarus-Wales.....2-1
02.09.00 .....Norway-Armenia.....0-0
02.09.00 .....Ukraine-Poland.....1-3
07.10.00 .....Armenia-Ukraine.....2-3
07.10.00 .....Poland-Belarus.....3-1
07.10.00 .....Wales-Norway.....1-1
11.10.00 .....Belarus-Armenia.....2-1
11.10.00 .....Norway-Ukraine.....0-1
11.10.00 .....Poland-Wales.....0-0
24.03.01 .....Armenia-Wales.....2-2
24.03.01 .....Norway-Poland.....2-3
24.03.01 .....Ukraine-Belarus.....0-0
28.03.01 .....Belarus-Norway.....2-1
28.03.01 .....Poland-Armenia.....4-0
28.03.01 .....Wales-Ukraine.....1-1
02.06.01 .....Armenia-Belarus.....0-0
02.06.01 .....Ukraine-Norway.....0-0
02.06.01 .....Wales-Poland.....1-2
06.06.01 .....Armenia-Poland.....1-1
06.06.01 .....Norway-Belarus.....1-1
06.06.01 .....Ukraine-Wales.....1-1
01.09.01 .....Belarus-Ukraine
01.09.01 .....Poland-Norway
01.09.01 .....Wales-Armenia
05.09.01 .....Belarus-Poland
05.09.01 .....Norway-Wales
05.09.01 .....Ukraine-Armenia
06.10.01 .....Armenia-Norway
06.10.01 .....Poland-Ukraine
06.10.01 .....Wales-Belarus

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Poland	7	5	2	0	16	6	17
Belarus	7	3	3	1	8	7	12
Ukraine	7	2	4	1	7	7	10
Wales	7	0	5	2	7	9	5
Norway	7	0	4	3	5	8	4
Armenia	7	0	4	3	6	12	4

Group 6

Belgium, Croatia, Latvia, San Marino, Scotland

02.09.00.....Belgium-Croatia.....0-0
02.09.00.....Latvia-Scotland.....0-1
07.10.00.....Latvia-Belgium.....0-4
07.10.00.....San Marino-Scotland.....0-2
11.10.00.....Croatia-Scotland.....1-1
15.11.00.....San Marino-Latvia.....0-1
28.02.01.....Belgium-San Marino.....10-1
24.03.01.....Croatia-Latvia.....4-1
24.03.01.....Scotland-Belgium.....2-2
28.03.01.....Scotland-San Marino.....4-0
25.04.01.....Latvia-San Marino.....1-1
02.06.01.....Belgium-Latvia.....3-1
02.06.01.....Croatia-San Marino.....4-0
06.06.01.....Latvia-Croatia.....0-1
06.06.01.....San Marino-Belgium.....1-4
01.09.01.....Scotland-Croatia
05.09.01.....Belgium-Scotland
05.09.01.....San Marino-Croatia
06.10.01.....Croatia-Belgium
06.10.01.....Scotland-Latvia

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Belgium	6	4	2	0	23	5	14
Croatia	5	3	2	0	10	2	11
Scotland	5	3	2	0	10	3	11
Latvia	7	1	1	5	4	14	4
San Marino	7	0	1	6	3	26	1

Group 7

Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Israel, Liechtenstein, Spain

02.09.00 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Spain 1-2
03.09.00 .....Israel-Liechtenstein.....2-0
07.10.00 .....Liechtenstein-Austria 0-1
07.10.00 .....Spain-Israel 2-0
11.10.00 .....Austria-Spain.....1-1
11.10.00 .....Israel-Bosnia-Herzegovina.....3-1
24.03.01 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Austria 1-1
24.03.01 .....Spain-Liechtenstein 5-0
28.03.01 .....Austria-Israel.....2-1
28.03.01 .....Liechtenstein-Bosnia-Herz.....0-3
25.04.01 .....Austria-Liechtenstein.....2-0
02.06.01 .....Liechtenstein-Israel.....0-3
02.06.01 .....Spain-Bosnia-Herzegovina 4-1
06.06.01 .....Israel-Spain 1-1
01.09.01 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Israel
01.09.01 .....Spain-Austria
05.09.01 .....Austria-Bosnia-Herzegovina
05.09.01 .....Liechtenstein-Spain
07.10.01 .....Bosnia-Herz-Liechtenstein
07.10.01 .....Israel-Austria

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	6	4	2	0	15	4	14
Austria	5	3	2	0	7	3	11
Israel	6	3	1	2	10	6	10
Bosnia-Herz	5	1	1	3	7	10	4
Liechtenstein	6	0	0	6	0	16	0

Group 8

Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Romania

03.09.00 .....Hungary-Italy 2-2
03.09.00 .....Romania-Lithuania.....1-0
07.10.00 .....Italy-Romania.....3-0
07.10.00 .....Lithuania-Georgia 0-4
11.10.00 .....Italy-Georgia 2-0
11.10.00 .....Lithuania-Hungary 1-6
24.03.01 .....Hungary-Lithuania 1-1
24.03.01 .....Romania-Italy.....0-2
28.03.01 .....Georgia-Romania 0-2
28.03.01 .....Italy-Lithuania.....4-0
02.06.01 .....Georgia-Italy 1-2
02.06.01 .....Romania-Hungary.....2-0
06.06.01 .....Hungary-Georgia.....4-1
06.06.01 .....Lithuania-Romania.....1-2
01.09.01 .....Georgia-Hungary
01.09.01 .....Lithuania-Italy
05.09.01 .....Georgia-Lithuania
05.09.01 .....Hungary-Romania
06.10.01 .....Italy-Hungary
06.10.01 .....Romania-Georgia

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	6	5	1	0	15	3	16
Romania	6	4	0	2	7	6	12
Hungary	5	2	2	1	13	7	8
Georgia	5	1	0	4	6	10	3
Lithuania	6	0	1	5	3	18	1

Group 9

Albania, England, Finland, Germany, Greece

02.09.00.....Finland-Albania 2-1
02.09.00.....Germany-Greece 2-0
07.10.00.....England-Germany.....0-1
07.10.00.....Greece-Finland.....1-0
11.10.00.....Albania-Greece.....2-0
11.10.00.....Finland-England 0-0
24.03.01.....England-Finland 2-1
24.03.01.....Germany-Albania.....2-1
28.03.01.....Albania-England 1-3
28.03.01.....Greece-Germany 2-4
02.06.01.....Finland-Germany 2-2
02.06.01.....Greece-Albania.....1-0
06.06.01.....Albania-Germany.....0-2
06.06.01.....Greece-England.....0-2
01.09.01.....Albania-Finland
01.09.01.....Germany-England
05.09.01.....England-Albania
05.09.01.....Finland-Greece
06.10.01.....England-Greece
06.10.01.....Germany-Finland

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	6	5	1	0	13	5	16
England	5	3	1	1	7	3	10
Greece	6	2	0	4	4	10	6
Finland	5	1	2	2	5	6	5
Albania	6	1	0	5	5	10	3

Group winners qualify automatically for the finals. The nine group runners-up and the third-placed Asian team will be drawn in five head-to-head ties, the winners of which also qualify for the finals.

THE FOOTBALL CONFEDERATION

Mexico on the rocks

MEXICO are now in grave danger of missing out on the World Cup finals after suffering straight defeats in their two June qualifiers. Coach Enrique Meza resigned after the second loss, 3-1 away to **Honduras**, which left his side four points adrift of third place, the lowest qualifying berth.

His replacement, Javier Aguirre, has only five games left to close the gap.

The Mexicans lost their earlier game 2-1 at home to **Costa Rica**, the only time they have ever been defeated at the Azteca stadium in a competitive match.

Yet they started the game well enough. Jose Manuel Abundis put Mexico in front after seven minutes, heading in a corner, and his team created several more scoring chances as the Costa Rican defence rocked.

But the visitors appeared to deal better with the scorching heat and began to dominate the game. They deservedly equalised with 18 minutes to play, Roland Fonseca hitting home a delightful 25-yard free-kick. Substitute Hernan Medford, a veteran of Costa Rica's only previous appearance at the finals, in 1990, then knocked in the winner from close range in the 86th minute.

Four days later, in San Pedro Sula, it was Honduras striker Carlos Pavon who did the damage, scoring a hat-trick to put Mexico on the slide.

Pavon had also scored in the previous tie, away to **Trinidad & Tobago**, hitting the first in Honduras' 4-2 win in Port-of-Spain.

This victory put the side clear in third, two points behind second-placed Costa Rica, who followed up their defeat of Mexico with another win, 2-1 at home to **Jamaica**.

The Reggae Boyz appear too reliant on their home form to harbour any real hopes of qualifying for the finals. They have now lost four out of five of their away qualifiers in the current campaign, including the ties from the semi-final round; by contrast, they are unbeaten in 51 games at home in Kingston.

The latest was a 0-0 draw with group leaders the **United States**, who then beat Trinidad & Tobago 2-0 at home in Foxboro to close in on qualification. The USA, still unbeaten in the Final round group, now need a maximum of eight points from their five remaining games.

Michael Bowesfield

3 teams qualify

FINAL ROUND

Costa Rica, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Trinidad & Tobago, United States

28.02.01 .....Costa Rica-Honduras 2-2
28.02.01 .....Jamaica-Trinidad & Tobago.....1-0
28.02.01 .....United States-Mexico.....2-0
25.03.01 .....Mexico-Jamaica 4-0
28.03.01 .....Costa Rica-Trinidad & Tobago 3-0
28.03.01 .....Honduras-United States.....1-2
25.04.01 .....Jamaica-Honduras.....1-1
25.04.01 .....Trinidad & Tobago-Mexico.....1-1
25.04.01 .....United States-Costa Rica.....1-0
16.06.01 .....Jamaica-United States 0-0
16.06.01 .....Mexico-Costa Rica 1-2
16.06.01 .....Trinidad & Tobago-Honduras 2-4
20.06.01 .....Costa Rica-Jamaica 2-1
20.06.01 .....Honduras-Mexico.....3-1
20.06.01 .....United States-Trinidad & Tobago....2-0
30.06.01 .....Trinidad & Tobago-Jamaica
01.07.01 .....Honduras-Costa Rica
01.07.01 .....Mexico-United States
01.09.01 .....Trinidad & Tobago-Costa Rica
01.09.01 .....United States-Honduras
02.09.01 .....Jamaica-Mexico
05.09.01 .....Costa Rica-United States
05.09.01 .....Honduras-Jamaica
05.09.01 .....Mexico-Trinidad & Tobago
07.10.01 .....Costa Rica-Mexico
07.10.01 .....Honduras-Trinidad & Tobago
07.10.01 .....United States-Jamaica
11.11.01 .....Jamaica-Costa Rica
11.11.01 .....Mexico-Honduras
11.11.01 .....Trinidad & Tobago-United States

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
United States	5	4	1	0	7	1	13
Costa Rica	5	3	1	1	9	5	10
Honduras	5	2	2	1	11	8	8
Jamaica	5	1	2	2	3	7	5
Mexico	5	1	1	3	7	8	4
Trinidad & Tob	5	0	1	4	3	11	1

The top three qualify for the finals.

Results from the preliminary and Semi-Final rounds will be printed in future issues.

OCEANIA

Aussies one step away

AUSTRALIA are now just one step away from the finals after beating **New Zealand** 6-1 on aggregate in the regional play-off.

The Socceroos will qualify for Japan/South Korea if they beat the fifth-placed South American team, likely to be Colombia, Uruguay or even, possibly, Brazil, in a two-leg play-off later in the year.

Brett Emerton got the Aussies on their way against New Zealand with both goals in the 2-0 first leg victory in Wellington. His opener came in the fifth minute, after he picked up a Stan Lazaridis cross, outpaced two defenders and slotted home. Eight minutes from the end, Emerton benefitted from a goalkeeping clanger, Jason Batty hitting a clearance straight at the Australian forward, who headed the ball into the empty net.

New Zealand were not without their chances, and appeared capable of snatching a draw until Australia scored their second.

Emerton was on target again in the

Centre of attention...Australia's Emerton during the Oceania play-off

return in Sydney, putting his side 2-0 up after David Zdrilic had hit the opener. Just before half-time, New Zealand pulled a goal back, Vaughan Coveny converting a penalty awarded after Jonathan Perry was fouled in the box.

But it proved to be the Aussies' only setback, as second-half goals from John Aloisi and another from Zdrilic put the outcome beyond doubt.

That Coveny penalty was the only goal conceded by Australia in their six qualifiers to date; they have scored 72.

New Zealand had won their place in the Oceania play-off by topping qualifying Group B, played on home soil in Auckland. Coveny was the star of the show, hitting eight of New Zealand's overall total of 19 goals in the four games. There were hat-tricks against **Tahiti** first time out and **Vanuatu** in the final group match, plus another couple in the 5-1 defeat of **Solomon Islands**.

Coveny was rested for the 2-0 win over **Cook Islands**, a surprisingly narrow margin of victory given that the Polynesians conceded 23 goals in their other three games.

Michael Bowesfield

0 or 1 team(s) qualify

FIRST ROUND

Group 1

American Samoa, Australia, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga

07.04.01 .....Samoa-Tonga 0-1
07.04.01 .....Fiji-American Samoa 13-0
09.04.01 .....Tonga-Australia 0-22
09.04.01 .....American Samoa-Samoa 0-8
11.04.01 .....Samoa-Fiji 1-6
11.04.01 .....Australia-American Samoa 31-0
14.04.01 .....Fiji-Australia 0-2
14.04.01 .....American Samoa-Tonga 0-5
16.04.01 .....Australia-Samoa 11-0
16.04.01 .....Tonga-Fiji 1-8

All ties played in Coffs Harbour, Australia

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Australia*	4	4	0	0	66	0	12
Fiji	4	3	0	1	27	4	9
Tonga	4	2	0	2	7	30	6
Samoa	4	1	0	3	9	18	3
American Samoa	4	0	0	4	0	57	0

**Qualified for Oceania play-off*

Group 2

Cook Islands, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Tahiti, Vanuatu

04.06.01 .....Vanuatu-Tahiti 1-6
04.06.01 .....Solomon Islands-Cook Islands 9-1
06.06.01 .....Tahiti-New Zealand 0-5
06.06.01 .....Cook Islands-Vanuatu 1-8
08.06.01 .....Vanuatu-Solomon Islands 2-7
08.06.01 .....New Zealand-Cook Islands 2-0
11.06.01 .....Solomon Islands-New Zealand 1-5
11.06.01 .....Cook Islands-Tahiti 0-6
13.06.01 .....New Zealand-Vanuatu 7-0
13.06.01 .....Tahiti-Solomon Islands 2-0

All ties played in Auckland, New Zealand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
New Zealand*	4	4	0	0	19	1	12
Tahiti	4	3	0	1	14	6	9
Solomon Islands	4	2	0	2	17	10	6
Vanuatu	4	1	0	3	11	21	3
Cook Islands	4	0	0	4	2	25	0

**Qualified for Oceania play-off*

OCEANIA PLAY-OFF

20.06.01 .....New Zealand-Australia 0-2
24.06.01 .....Australia-New Zealand 4-1
.....*Australia 6-1 on agg*

Australia will play home and away against the fifth-placed South American country for a place in the finals.

SOUTH AMERICA

Five wins in a row for Ecuador

ECUADOR'S 2-1 win away to **Peru** in early June was their fifth straight qualifying victory and put them within sight of progressing to the World Cup finals for the first time.

With five rounds to play, Ecuador, lying third, have a six-point lead over fifth-placed Colombia, the side currently just below the automatic qualification places.

Ecuador had a poor start to the game in Lima, going behind in the second minute to a Claudio Pizarro header. But Edison Mendez equalised nine minutes later and his side survived without further loss despite Peru's dominance.

Mendez presented his side with a major problem in the 81st minute, however, after being sent off. But in the dying seconds Agustin Delgado broke past the defence in a one-on-one with goalkeeper Miguel Miranda to secure the three points.

Ecuador had been boosted by the return to the bench of coach Hernan Dario Gomez, who had threatened to quit the post of national team boss after being shot in Guayaquil.

Hernan Crespo stayed top of the South American scorers' chart after hitting **Argentina's** final goal in their 3-0 home win over **Colombia**.

The home side were 3-0 ahead by half-time, the other goals coming from Kily Gonzalez and Claudio Lopez. However it was an Argentinian defender, Arsenal's Nelson Vivas, who was the game's outstanding player.

The result left Argentina needing five points at most, from their remaining five ties, to qualify automatically.

Paraguay remained in second place in the table and maintained their 100 per cent home record in the tournament after Carlos Paredes scored the only goal of the game at home to **Chile** three minutes into injury time.

Paraguay keeper Jose Luis Chilavert had earlier had a penalty saved by Chile's Argentina-born keeper Sergio Vargas, and the home side finished the game with just 10 men following the dismissal of Celso Ayala 20 minutes from time.

Bolivia, almost certainly out of contention for a qualifying place, introduced a number of young newcomers against **Venezuela** in La Paz, and ran out convincing 5-0 winners. Julio Baldivieso and Joaquin Botero both scored twice.

The Uruguay v Brazil clash was postponed until July 1 due to the latter's involvement in the Confederations Cup.

Eric Weil

4 or 5 teams qualify

Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

28.03.00 .....Colombia-Brazil 0-0
29.03.00 .....Argentina-Chile 4-1
29.03.00 .....Ecuador-Venezuela 2-0
29.03.00 .....Peru-Paraguay 2-0
29.03.00 .....Uruguay-Bolivia 1-0
26.04.00 .....Bolivia-Colombia 1-1
26.04.00 .....Brazil-Ecuador 3-2
26.04.00 .....Chile-Peru 1-1
26.04.00 .....Paraguay-Uruguay 1-0
26.04.00 .....Venezuela-Argentina 0-4
03.06.00 .....Paraguay-Ecuador 3-1
03.06.00 .....Uruguay-Chile 2-1
04.06.00 .....Argentina-Bolivia 1-0
04.06.00 .....Colombia-Venezuela 3-0
04.06.00 .....Peru-Brazil 0-1
28.06.00 .....Brazil-Uruguay 1-1
28.06.00 .....Venezuela-Bolivia 4-2
29.06.00 .....Chile-Paraguay 3-1
29.06.00 .....Colombia-Argentina 1-3
29.06.00 .....Ecuador-Peru 2-1
18.07.00 .....Paraguay-Brazil 2-1
18.07.00 .....Uruguay-Venezuela 3-1
19.07.00 .....Argentina-Ecuador 2-0
19.07.00 .....Bolivia-Chile 1-0
19.07.00 .....Peru-Colombia 0-1
25.07.00 .....Ecuador-Colombia 0-0
25.07.00 .....Venezuela-Chile 0-2
26.07.00 .....Brazil-Argentina 3-1
26.07.00 .....Uruguay-Peru 0-0
27.07.00 .....Bolivia-Paraguay 0-0
15.08.00 .....Chile-Brazil 3-0
15.08.00 .....Colombia-Uruguay 1-0
16.08.00 .....Argentina-Paraguay 1-1
16.08.00 .....Ecuador-Bolivia 2-0
16.08.00 .....Peru-Venezuela 1-0
02.09.00 .....Chile-Colombia 0-1
02.09.00 .....Paraguay-Venezuela 3-0
03.09.00 .....Brazil-Bolivia 5-0
03.09.00 .....Peru-Argentina 1-2
03.09.00 .....Uruguay-Ecuador 4-0
07.10.00 .....Colombia-Paraguay 0-2
08.10.00 .....Argentina-Uruguay 2-1
08.10.00 .....Bolivia-Peru 1-0
08.10.00 .....Ecuador-Chile 1-0
08.10.00 .....Venezuela-Brazil 0-6
15.11.00 .....Bolivia-Uruguay 0-0
15.11.00 .....Brazil-Colombia 1-0
15.11.00 .....Chile-Argentina 0-2
15.11.00 .....Paraguay-Peru 5-1
15.11.00 .....Venezuela-Ecuador 1-2
27.03.01 .....Colombia-Bolivia 2-0
27.03.01 .....Peru-Chile 3-1
28.03.01 .....Argentina-Venezuela 5-0
28.03.01 .....Ecuador-Brazil 1-0
28.03.01 .....Uruguay-Paraguay 0-1
24.04.01 .....Chile-Uruguay 0-1
24.04.01 .....Ecuador-Paraguay 2-1
24.04.01 .....Venezuela-Colombia 2-2
25.04.01 .....Bolivia-Argentina 3-3
25.04.01 .....Brazil-Peru 1-1
02.06.01 .....Paraguay-Chile 1-0
02.06.01 .....Peru-Ecuador 1-2
03.06.01 .....Argentina-Colombia 3-0
03.06.01 .....Bolivia-Venezuela 5-0
01.07.01 .....Uruguay-Brazil
14/15.08.01 ...Chile-Bolivia
14/15.08.01 ...Venezuela-Uruguay
14/15.08.01 ...Brazil-Paraguay
14/15.08.01 ...Colombia-Peru
14/15.08.01 ...Ecuador-Argentina
04/05.09.01 ...Chile-Venezuela
04/05.09.01 ...Peru-Uruguay
04/05.09.01 ...Argentina-Brazil
04/05.09.01 ...Colombia-Ecuador
04/05.09.01 ...Paraguay-Bolivia
06.10.01 .....Bolivia-Ecuador
06.10.01 .....Brazil-Chile
06.10.01 .....Paraguay-Argentina
06.10.01 .....Uruguay-Colombia
06.10.01 .....Venezuela-Peru
07.11.01 .....Argentina-Peru
07.11.01 .....Bolivia-Brazil
07.11.01 .....Colombia-Chile
07.11.01 .....Ecuador-Uruguay
07.11.01 .....Venezuela-Paraguay
14.11.01 .....Brazil-Venezuela
14.11.01 .....Chile-Ecuador
14.11.01 .....Paraguay-Colombia
14.11.01 .....Peru-Bolivia
14.11.01 .....Uruguay-Argentina

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentina	13	10	2	1	33	11	32
Paraguay	13	8	2	3	21	11	26
Ecuador	13	8	1	4	17	16	25
Brazil	12	6	3	3	22	11	21
Colombia	13	5	4	4	12	12	19
Uruguay	12	5	3	4	13	8	18
Bolivia	13	3	4	6	13	19	13
Peru	13	3	3	7	12	17	12
Chile	13	3	1	9	12	18	10
Venezuela	13	1	1	11	8	40	4

Top four teams qualify automatically for the finals. Fifth-placed team play off against winners of Oceania section for a place in the finals.

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WORLD SOCCER 33M

Roman conquerors

Paddy Agnew in Rome witnesses a title triumph for the capital city

On our way...Batistuta (left) and Totti (right) celebrate Montella's goal in the final game of the season

IN THE end, it was disarmingly predictable. Roma lifted their third Italian title on the final day of the season when beating a less-than-combative Parma 3-1 in front of their ecstatic fans at the Olympic stadium in Rome.

But while the outcome to this dramatic title contest might have gone according to the script, Roma's fans nonetheless experienced a traumatic last month as the long-time League leaders ran out of steam. The extent of the supporters' relief at finally securing the title was all too evident, 2,000 of them running on to the pitch five minutes from the end of the Parma game and ripping the clothes off the Roma players in celebration.

Four draws in the side's final seven games had served to heighten the tension and leave us with a remarkable situation on the last morning when, in theory, second-placed Juventus (trailing by two points) and third-placed Lazio (three points away) could both still have won the title.

Roma's difficulties were made manifest on the penultimate day when they were held to a 2-2 draw away to subsequently relegated Napoli. Roma had gone into that game with a four-point lead and had the title in their hands for much of the second half as they led 2-1, only to concede a late, soft equaliser.

Underlining the nervous tension within the Roma camp was a spectacular touchline 'tiff', caught on TV, between coach Fabio Capello and substitute Vincenzo Montella, which ended with the striker calling his coach a "piece of shit".

The tension in the camp, the negative psychological impact of having dropped a 'match point' against Napoli and the unusually late climax to the Serie A season all meant that, in the build-up to Roma's final game, the club were feeling the heat.

Increasingly superstitious Roma fans refused to talk about the *scudetto* (title) but rather engaged in extended exercises in linguistic dexterity when asked about the championship contest, talking about the 'thing', the 'what-you-may-call-it' or the 'truke-truke'.

In the end, all the worry and fan superstition seemed just silly. In football, motivation counts, and on the last day of the season Roma had plenty. For them, it was the game of a lifetime, while for a Parma side already qualified for the Champions League, it was merely the last unwelcome stop before the summer holidays.

As a contest, the match lasted just about 20 minutes. That was all it took before Roma opened the scoring, captain and local hero Francesco Totti appropriately getting the goal with a majestic, outside of right foot strike.

Goals from Montella and Gabriel Batistuta increased the margin but the match was over from the moment Totti's shot hit the net.

Speaking afterwards, the Roma captain, a lifelong Roma fan, summed up his feelings in the simplest manner: "This is a huge satisfaction. This is a dream that I carried around with me in my schoolbag as a little boy. This is the dream of all Roma fans."

While the close-run nature of the final month had also left Juventus and Lazio fans dreaming, no neutral observer could deny that, in the end, Roma were thoroughly deserving winners of the title.

On top of the table since the second day, Roma set such a blistering pace that four of the five sides that followed them home had opted to change coach in mid-season (Lazio, Parma, Milan and Inter) while the fifth (Juventus) officially confirmed the sacking of Carlo Ancelotti and the appointment of his immediate predecessor Marcello Lippi on the last day of the season.

Simple mathematics also underline Roma's achievements. For a start, their final total of 75 points is the highest ever registered since Italian soccer adopted the three points for a win system in the 1994-95 season.

Secondly, the final tally of second-placed Juventus, 73 points, would have been enough to win five of the last six championships.

As is always the case, no single factor explains this triumph. Rather Roma's success represents the coming together of a number of winning elements. First and foremost, there is the spending power of industrialist Franco Sensi, a man who has invested heavily in the club since taking over in November 1993.

If Sensi provided the planks, there is no doubt that the man who put together the platform was coach Capello. Roma's title prospects took a massive qualitative leap forward two summers ago

when Capello was called in to replace Czech Zdenek Zeman.

The second most successful contemporary Italian coach, after national team manager Giovanni Trapattoni, Capello has now lifted five Italian titles (the other four with Milan in the early 1990s) and one Spanish title (with Real Madrid in 1997).

A tough disciplinarian who demands that his players use the formal 'Lei' (you) when addressing him rather than the informal 'tu', Capello had kicked a lot of famous footballing ass in Milan and Madrid before he took over at Roma.

His determination, experience and craft held Roma together throughout a final frantic month when media pressure and fan expectation might have ruined many another championship contender. His footballing savvy enabled him to make the best of what he found when he arrived at Roma, namely talented players such as captain Totti, Brazilian Cafu, Frenchman Vincent Candela, midfielder Damiano Tommasi and strikers Marco Delvecchio and Montella.

Capello then completed his championship-winning formation by adding three key figures last summer: Argentinian defender Walter Samuel, Brazilian midfielder Emerson and, above all, striker Batistuta.

Letting fly...Batistuta shoots for goal against Parma

Arresting sight...fans stripped Roma keeper Antonioli

This season, Roma followed the pattern usually set by Capello-coached sides. In other words, he harvested much grain in the autumn, leaving himself with a large enough supply in the barn to ride out the inevitable end of season loss of form.

Finally, as we noted in this column last month, Roma effectively wrapped up the title when holding their closest rivals, Lazio and Juventus, to consecutive 2-2 draws in late April and early May.

In particular, Roma's injury-time equaliser from Montella in their 2-2 away draw with Juventus was arguably the defining moment in the Serie A season.

The intriguing question now concerns Roma's future. Knowing Capello, it would not surprise us if next season he concentrated much Roma time and attention on the Champions League, even at the expense of defending the League title.

The coach's tough, real-politik line of reasoning may well be that, having won the title, now it is time to compensate Roma for arguably their most disappointing experience of the post-war era, namely their 1984 Champions Cup Final loss to Liverpool in their own Olympic stadium.

As for the others, they can only lick their wounds and hope for better things under new management next year. The final day of the season was marked by the confirmation of a series of ill-kept secrets re coaching changes – Lippi to replace Ancelotti at Juventus, Turk Fatih Terim to replace Cesare Maldini at Milan and Argentinian Hector Cuper to replace Marco Tardelli at Inter.

Of all these changes, the former was by far the most controversial. Juventus ended the season on a high note, winning six of their last seven games (drawing the seventh with Roma), but president Umberto Agnelli explained that the club had felt obliged to sack Ancelotti because sections of the media and fans were against him.

Ancelotti is unlikely to remain unemployed for long, however.

While Terim, brilliantly effective with Fiorentina before he fell out with the ruling Cecchi Gori family, could do well at Milan, one wonders if ex-Valencia coach Cuper knows what he is letting himself in for at an Inter side who hit a new low when losing the Milan derby 6-0 in mid-May.

As for the others, Roberto Mancini, the man who took over from Terim at Fiorentina, earned his right to hold on to the job by steering the club through to a sixth Italian Cup win, with a 2-1 aggregate win over Parma that put them into the UEFA Cup.

Parma ended the season satisfactorily, notwithstanding the Cup Final defeat and that loss to Roma, when easily qualifying for Italy's fourth Champions League slot.

For the record, then, Italy's Champions League quartet next season comprises: Roma, Juventus (group phase); Lazio, Parma (qualifying round). The two Milan sides and Fiorentina have qualified for the UEFA Cup, while Brescia (inspired by golden-oldie Roberto Baggio) will contest the InterToto Cup.

At the other end of the table, Vicenza, Napoli, Bari and either Reggina or Verona go down to Serie B, while the four sides promoted into Serie A next season are Torino, Piacenza, Chievo and Venezia.

Cuper leaves on a low

Jeff King on how Barcelona denied Valencia on the final day of the season

MANANA, manana, manana... It is no secret that your average Spaniard has never heard the one about 'not putting off for tomorrow what you can do today'. Fittingly, 11 of Spain's top-flight clubs went into the final game of the season with their future prospects in the balance.

Deportivo clinched the second automatic Champions League place with a convincing 4-0 victory against Malaga. Mallorca won their last four matches but needed Malaga to get a result at Riazor to steal second place.

Barcelona's 3-2 defeat of Valencia meant the *Ches*, still hungover from their Champions League Final loss, slipped out of the Champions League frame – and put the Camp Nou club into Europe's top competition.

If sixth-placed Celta win the Spanish Cup, seventh-placed Villarreal – who thumped Espanyol 4-0 – will qualify for Europe for the first time.

At the bottom, Oviedo's 4-2 defeat at Mallorca, coupled with Osasuna's 1-0 victory at Real Sociedad, sent the former tumbling into the Second Division along with already doomed Racing Santander and Numancia – and reprieved Valladolid and Zaragoza.

If the Valencia players had been more accurate from the spot against Bayern Munich, Hector Cuper would have become the first non-European coach to win the European Cup since fellow Argentinian Helenio Herrera in 1965. Instead, he became the first man to lose consecutive Finals. That still represents a phenomenal achievement for a club like Valencia, yet Cuper's Mestalla farewell produced barely a ripple of applause.

The parallels between Cuper and Herrera extend beyond nationality. 'HH' was unceremoniously dumped by Barcelona in 1960 after leading the Catalans to successive titles, and at his next destination, Internazionale, he won two European Cups and three *scudettos*. If Cuper achieves anything like that success at Inter, his new club, Valencia fans will have ample reason to rue their shoddy behaviour.

It is the end of an era at Mestalla in more ways than one, since neither Gaizka Mendieta nor Kily Gonzalez want to hang around for the inevitable freefall. Valencia's first recruit for 2001-02 is Juve reserve striker Darko Kovacevic. With all due respect, that's another sign that the *Ches* are downwardly mobile. The fact that Javier Irureta, Mane, Luis Aragones and Victor Fernandez have all passed on occupying the Mestalla hot seat is evidence that Spanish insiders reckon Cuper is an impossible act to follow.

The man who said yes has less to lose than that big-name quartet. Rafa Benitez was a highly-rated reserve team coach at Real Madrid in the mid-1990s and led Tenerife to promotion in 2000-01. The 41-year-old's top-flight record is less flattering. He was sacked by Valladolid after two wins in 23 games in 1995-96 and his Extremadura side were relegated in 1998-99.

The moral of Cuper's two years at Mestalla is clear: tactical discipline and ferocious competitiveness can get you an awful long way, but it won't get you over the final hurdle.

Valencia took everything Bayern Munich could throw at them in Milan without flinching. Yet Oliver Kahn was Man of the Match after the quietest 120 minutes of his career. The big keeper didn't make his first save until the 85th minute: not his first blinding save, not even his first reasonably good save; his first save, full stop.

That alarming lack of punch was Valencia's downfall on the domestic front too. Champions Real Madrid conceded 40 goals to Valencia's 34. Unfortunately, the *Ches*' main strike pairing, John Carew and Juan Sanchez, scored fewer goals between them than Raul on his own. Or Javi Moreno. Or Rivaldo, who scored 36 goals in what Camp Nou insiders dubbed a 'lacklustre' season.

Ah, Rivaldo. What might Hector Cuper have achieved with a player like the Brazilian on board? His stunning hat-trick against Valencia on the final day was a timely reminder that individual talent can save even the worst organised team.

Rivaldo's first two goals were majestic; the third was a gravity-defying effort worthy of Hollywood. It also sealed Valencia's unenviable record of six games, six defeats against Real Madrid, Depor and Barça; further evidence that impeccable preparation is no substitute for sheer talent.

Valencia's back-to-back runs to the Champions League Final represent a £43m injection in prize money, TV and match receipts. Rivaldo has spent much of the year listening to claims he isn't worth his £4million annual salary and should be sold. Do the maths!

"If I was the board I wouldn't sell me," says the Brazilian. "People go on about my age, but I'm only 29, the same as Figo or Zidane and nobody harps on about their age. Zidane is 29 next month, yet Real Madrid are desperate to sign him! I've got two years left on my contract and I've always said I want to stay at Barcelona. I just hope my goals against Valencia are a springboard to Champions League success."

Real Madrid sealed their 28th

Overdrive...Rivaldo completes his hat-trick against Valencia with a spectacular overhead effort

championship with two games to spare. The 5-0 title-clincher against Alaves echoed much that was exceptional about Madrid's season: Mr Consistency Raul scored twice, most-improved player Guti bagged another and a revitalised Fernando Hierro weighed in with his 100th League goal. Figo's three assists took his year's work to 17; eight more than Zaragoza's Juanele, Spain's next best provider.

Only 24 on June 27, Raul has already piled up 125 League goals. Butragueno took 11 years to score his 124. Despite regular dispatches on Raul's precarious physical condition, his appetite for the fray never wavers. No other Madrid player matched his 36 League games or 3,112 minutes of action. "It's never a good idea to rest Raul or take him off," says Real coach Vicente Del Bosque. "He's not only a born winner but he also has the knack of being where it matters in the last act."

A mention, too, for Del Bosque; lest anybody forget, a champion in his first full season on the bench. He is the first Spaniard to coach Madrid to the title since Luis Molowny in 1985-86.

The final act of the Spanish Second Division was as dramatic as the top-flight version. Sevilla clinched promotion as champions with two games to spare, leaving Betis, Tenerife and Atletico Madrid in a three-way battle for the other two places. Last day victories for all three meant Betis finished second and Tenerife edged Atletico out on goal difference.

For 42 tantalising minutes – between Luque's 27th-minute winner for Atletico at Getafe and Hugo Morales' 69th-minute winner for Tenerife at Leganes – Atletico were in the promotion frame. Tellingly, for the first time all season. The 50,000 fans that pack the Vicente Calderon every game deserve better than that too little, too late effort.

However, the news that Atletico legend Luis Aragones has accepted the Second Division challenge will cheer their hearts – expect the wily old coach to have his men screeching out of the gate come August.

Island side still making a splash in the big time

Jeff King on Mallorca's progress to the Champions League

A SPANISH LEAGUE record 687 games at eight clubs means the Luis Aragones school of football is well-documented. The Madrid-born coach (right) has consistently produced sides with two defining characteristics: one, they swear on the bible of counter-attack; two, they're conditioned to finish the season like express trains.

Aragones' Mallorca lived up to expectations on both counts. Led by the quicksilver Cameroonian Samuel Eto'o, the Dark Reds proved more deadly on the counter than Sugar Ray Leonard at his peak. In the end, only Deportivo's resilience denied Mallorca second place in the League.

As recently as 1980 the islanders were scratching around in Spain's regional leagues. Their transformation can be traced back to 1995, when Antonio Asensio became major shareholder. The media baron died in April but his legacy includes the 23,142-capacity Son Moix stadium and a £3.5million training complex.

The club's progress to the upper echelons was not without its hiccups, however. In 1996-97 coach Victor Munoz was sacked with four games to play, even though his team were top of the Second Division. Asensio cited flagging morale, but the gamble nearly backfired. Under caretaker Tomeu Llompart, Mallorca dropped to third place before defeating Rayo in the play-offs to reach the top flight.

The decision to recruit Hector Cuper proved more perceptive, the Argentinian leading the club to fifth- and third-place League finishes, not to mention Spanish and European Cup-winners Cup Finals.

Fernando Vazquez was brought in when Cuper moved on to Valencia, but he was sacked last summer despite leading Mallorca to a still highly respectable 10th place.

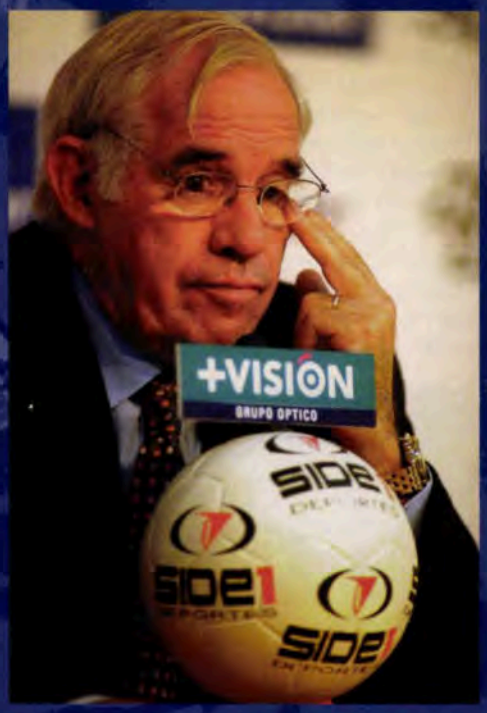
That is when Aragones arrived, having spent the 1999-00 immersed in a relegation dog-fight at Oviedo. But although he rescued that club, the veteran coach appeared to have another struggle ahead as Mallorca sold top scorer Diego Tristan and midfield stars Lauren and Jovan Stankovic.

Sure enough, after the first six games of last season, Mallorca were propping up the table. However, back-to-back wins against Barça and Real Madrid buried any notion of a crisis.

Eventually, Aragones' team finished eight points ahead of Barça and Valencia to equal Cuper's third-place finish of 1998-99.

Samuel Eto'o, on loan from Real Madrid, has been a revelation, his bare-faced cheek and pace causing defenders migraines. Former Barça apprentice Alberto Luque, 23, is more of a penalty-box animal, while home-grown winger Alvaro Novo, 23, combines qualities of both of the above.

Former Lanus playmaker Ariel 'Nutmeg' Ibagaza, 25, began to live up to his nickname too during last season.



Yet there is plenty of experience in the side. At 35, former Barça centre-back Miguel Angel Nadal has played his way back into the Spain side, right-back Xabier Olaizola, 31, has made more top-flight appearances for Mallorca than any other player, and left-back Miquel Soler is impossibly athletic for a 36-year-old.

In midfield, Vicente Engonga, 35, remains an immutable presence, while Marcos, 32, has thrived back at his first club. Former Ajax and Betis winger Finidi George, 30, struggled early on but scored some decisive goals in the final straight.

Aragones' decision to take his book of rules to Atletico Madrid (for a fourth spell) leaves a question mark over Mallorca's future. If several key players also leave, the new coach will have to rebuild in record time before the Champions League preliminaries. Luque, Ibagaza and centre-half Fernando Nino are all targets for bigger clubs, while young keepers Leo Franco and Miki have been so impressive that Mallorca will also cash in on Carlos Roa and German Burgos.

Between them, past players Marcelino, Romero, Amato, Valeron, Mena, Dani, Lauren and Diego Tristan cost Mallorca just £7million. Yet they were sold on for £48m, a staggering piece of business by any standard.

The key to Mallorca's future is how well they reinvest their latest round of profits.

Points but no prizes

The national team were far from convincing in their recent World Cup qualifiers, writes Nick Bidwell

WHILE Franz Beckenbauer may claim Germany are home and dry on the road to World Cup 2002, their performances in the June qualifiers suggested otherwise.

Yes, Germany remain in command of Group 9, unbeaten in six games. But individual and collective problems abounded in the 2-2 draw away to Finland and 2-0 victory in Albania.

The chances of a renascent England winning the key September 1 showdown in Munich and going on to take top spot are not as negligible as Beckenbauer would care to believe.

Germany coach Rudi Voller is certainly taking nothing for granted and knows only too well how close his side's trip to Finland came to ending in disaster. Indeed, their catastrophic first-half performance was reminiscent of their Euro 2000 nightmare, a sluggish, disjointed display with absolutely nothing going right.

Marco Bode, Carsten Ramelow and Carsten Jancker all spurned decent scoring chances, while in the absence of the suspended Sebastian Deisler and injured Mehmet Scholl and Jens Jeremies, the midfield was desperately short of creativity and dynamism. More significantly, the three-man defence of Marko Rehmer, Jens Nowotny and Thomas Linke was constantly caught out, allowing Mikael Forssell to score twice before the break.

However, Voller's Germany are resilient, and thanks to a more positive attitude and tactical rethink – midfielder Bode retreated to left-back and Linke moved from the left of defence to stopper – they looked an altogether stronger proposition after the restart. A Michael Ballack penalty and Carsten Jancker goal duly saved the day.

"It was a game we almost lost," admitted Voller. "We could have been 3-0 down early in the second half when the Finns missed a good chance. But then we showed our great spirit and deserved to draw in the end."

Four days later in Albania, Voller's men were more comfortable, though still not wholly convincing. Rehmer opened the scoring on 28 minutes after Jancker headed an Oliver Neuville cross back across goal, and victory was secured mid-way through the second half when Ballack muscled his way through, dribbled around the keeper and calmly tucked the ball home.

Three more vital points and Voller would have been especially delighted with the growing maturity of Ballack and Deisler in midfield, their industry and clever use of the ball.

Decidedly less pleasing for the coach was Carsten Ramelow's first-half red card and another slipshod display from his defence, a sector where central man Jens Nowotny again disappointed.

Despite all this, Voller's first season in charge of Germany has been a success. How else to describe seven wins from 10 games and a haul of 16 out of 18 possible World Cup qualifying points?

Under Voller, everyone is once again pulling in the same direction, the team spirit is excellent, and after sticking to the internationally tried and tested early in his reign, it bodes well that the coach is now more open to the introduction of new faces. Freiburg's talented young utility man, Sebastian Kehl, and Schalke midfielders Gerald Asamoah and Jorg Bohme were all given their first caps in the 2-0 friendly win over Slovakia in May, and each one looked the part.

Kehl slotted in well in the centre of defence after coming on for the last half-hour, Bohme, another second-half substitute, was his usual thrusting self on the left flank and was involved in both Germany's goals, while Asamoah earned the Man of the Match award, opening the scoring with a fine left-foot shot and always threatening with his strong running and pace.

Asamoah, Ghana-born but now a naturalised German, was retained for the Finland and Albania games – playing superbly in the former, less so in the latter – and no doubt Bohme would have featured in those games too.

Maturing nicely...Michael Ballack impressed for Germany and scored against both Finland and Albania

However, he had to pull out of the squad after his wife, Michaela, suffered a miscarriage.

Bohme, arguably the most-improved player in the Bundesliga, was the star turn as Schalke beat the amateurs of Union Berlin 2-0 in the German Cup Final. Union had their moments, twice hitting the woodwork. But Schalke had too much experience and class and won out courtesy of a Bohme brace: a brilliant curling free-kick and a penalty.

It was a case of consolation for both finalists. After narrowly losing out to Bayern Munich in the title race, Schalke had the pick-me-up of an item of silverware; Union can now look forward to UEFA Cup football.

Meanwhile, life does not get any easier for ex-Bundesliga coach Christoph Daum, whose positive dope test last autumn led to his dismissal from Bayer Leverkusen and the federation abandoning their plans to employ him as national team boss.

Now in charge at Turkey's Besiktas, Daum was recently charged by state prosecutors in Koblenz of buying large quantities of cocaine in 1999 and 2000, and faces up to five years in jail.

If the allegations are substantiated, the German federation are likely to confiscate Daum's coaching licence.

A much more palatable coaching tale was the one emerging from Hansa Rostock, where Friedhelm Funkel has decided to employ his younger brother Wolfgang as his number two, the first time in Bundesliga history that two brothers have sat together on the bench.

There is no question of nepotism here. Previously an assistant coach with Second Division Rot-Weiss Oberhausen, Wolfgang played 305 Bundesliga games for Bayer Uerdingen and Kaiserslautern and even won two caps for West Germany in 1986. Last season, Friedhelm's Hansa achieved the feat of beating Bayern Munich home and away in the Bundesliga.

However, it will be harder for them to outwit Bayern next term, especially now that the German and European champions have signed Werder Bremen's outstanding Peruvian striker Claudio Pizarro for £5.3million.

Brothers in arms reunited at Bayern

HOPEFUL of maintaining their hegemony at home and abroad, Bayern Munich have been busy planning a family reunion at the Olympiastadion, buying Croat international siblings Niko and Robert Kovac from Hamburg and Bayer Leverkusen respectively.

The original plan was for midfielder Niko (above) and defender Robert (right) to see out their existing contracts and join Bayern for free in the summer of 2002. But anxious not to allow their stars to walk away without due recompense, Hamburg and Leverkusen were reluctantly forced to negotiate an immediate sale. Bayern will pay Leverkusen £5.6million for Robert and Hamburg £3.6m for Niko.

"We had no choice but to sell straight away," declared Hamburg coach Frank Pagelsdorf. "We were in a situation where we had to see the business side of things. Of course, I'm disappointed to see Niko go. He is the most attack-conscious defensive midfielder in the Bundesliga. Bayern have a very, very good buy."

Obviously, Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld agrees. Nothing gladdens his heart more than a player who can fulfil several roles, and 29-year-old Niko is just that; he can operate as a defensive or attacking midfielder, on the right or left, and even has experience in central defence. No matter that Bayern already boast a surfeit of midfield talent, Niko's versatility, tactical nous and high workrate should ensure him plenty of playing time in Bavaria.

Robert, two years younger, has much to offer Bayern too. Over the past two or three years he has developed into one of the best man-markers in German football, is extremely quick and bristles with tenacity. Despite Bayern's wall-to-wall success last season, their rearguard was not always the most secure of units – with Ghanaian defender Sammy Kuffour particularly guilty of a number of lapses during the campaign. Robert's renowned consistency will be much welcomed.

"I see my move as a huge challenge," he says. "There was no question of me signing for any other German club. They don't come any bigger than Bayern, and it's an added bonus I'll be playing alongside Niko."

The brothers, born in Berlin but qualified to play for Croatia through their parents, have lined up together at club level before. From 1996 to 1999, they played for Bayer Leverkusen, enjoying contrasting fortunes. While Robert went from strength to strength and became a mainstay of the defence, Niko was never one of coach Christoph Daum's favourites and was happy to leave in the summer of 1999, for Hamburg, where his career took off spectacularly.

"I got back my love of football," says Niko. "I didn't feel I had the confidence or trust of the coach at Leverkusen, and my game suffered. At Hamburg it was completely different. Pagelsdorf gave me the freedom to express my attacking qualities.

"It's not easy to leave Hamburg. I've had two wonderful years here, but the chance to play for Bayern doesn't come along every day."

The Bundesliga has a rich tradition of footballing brothers: Karl-Heinz and Michael Rummenigge, Uli and Dieter Hoeness, Karl-Heinz and Bernd Forster, Helmut and Erwin Kremers, and Klaus and Thomas Allofs to name only a few. Niko and Robert Kovac belong in such good company.

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Niko Kovac
Club Bayern Munich (Ger)
Country Croatia
Born October 15, 1971, in Berlin
Previous clubs Rapide Wedding, Hertha Zehlendorf, Hertha Berlin, Bayer Leverkusen, Hamburg
International debut December 1996, v Czech Republic
International caps 15 (1 goal)

Robert Kovac
Club Bayern Munich (Ger)
Country Croatia
Born April 6, 1974, in Berlin
Previous clubs Rapide Wedding, Hertha Zehlendorf, Nurnberg, Bayer Leverkusen
International debut April 1999, v Italy
International caps 14 (0 goals)

Eriksson gives England the edge

The national side have grown in stature under their new Swedish coach, says Gavin Hamilton

A SEASON that began with defeat by Germany at Wembley under Kevin Keegan – remember him? – ended with Sven Goran Eriksson becoming the first England manager to win his first five games in charge.

The first four matches – home friendlies against Spain and Mexico and World Cup qualifiers home to Finland and away in Albania – were expected to deliver victories, but the fifth, the final game of the season, against Greece in Athens, posed an altogether different challenge.

It is a testament to Eriksson's abilities that England came through the World Cup tie with flying colours, winning 2-0 and staying in contention for the automatic qualifying spot for the finals. The next game, against group leaders Germany in Munich on September 1, will effectively decide the outcome.

On paper, Eriksson has made few changes to the England set-up. He has used virtually the same personnel and tactics as Keegan, and even faced the same criticism as Howard Wilkinson, Keegan's temporary successor, for playing Liverpool striker Emile Heskey in midfield.

Yet the change in attitude has been immeasurable. Eriksson's calm, unflappable approach has seduced press and public alike, and the players have grown in confidence and stature as a result.

Eriksson's appointment of David Beckham as captain has galvanised the Manchester United midfielder, who shrugged off the ludicrous furore over his new '*Taxi Driver*' haircut and gave a commanding performance in Athens. Beckham's goal from a free-kick against Greece was his third in five games under Eriksson; previously, he had appeared just once on the England scoresheet.

Eriksson has also given an exciting glimpse of what the future holds by bringing new blood into the squad. Against Mexico at Pride Park, Derby, Eriksson gave debuts to West Ham pair Joe Cole and Michael Carrick, and Leeds striker Alan Smith. Arsenal left-back Ashley Cole has been hugely impressive and looks set to become a regular starter.

Cut above...David Beckham celebrates his free-kick goal against Greece

It looks like being a high-spending summer for Premier League clubs if the early transfer deals were anything to go by. Chelsea signed midfielder Frank Lampard from West Ham for £11million, while Arsenal lured young striker Francis Jeffers from Everton for £10m.

Lampard is the first Englishman to be signed by Chelsea's Italian coach, Claudio Ranieri, but the club appear to have paid over the odds for a player who has been dubbed the 'poor man's David Platt'.

Similarly, Jeffers is undoubtedly a promising striker – "the fox in the box we have been missing," according to Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger – but he spent much of last season sidelined through injury.

Arsenal say that they have made allowances for Jeffers' fitness, paying £8m up front, with the balance dependent on number of appearances.

Nevertheless, the eight-figure fees have set the benchmark for the coming months – even though a new transfer system could be in place before the start of next season.

Sol Campbell set the tone for the summer spending spree when he reportedly demanded £135,000 a week to stay at Tottenham when his contract expired last month.

The figure would have made him the world's highest paid player, ahead of current top earners Zinedine Zidane, Gabriel Batistuta, Luis Figo and Rivaldo. But many people would struggle to find room for Campbell in a list of the world's 100 best players, let alone a top five featuring the above illustrious names. But it is an indication of the bargaining power currently held by out-of-contract players that Campbell felt able to make such extravagant demands.

Tottenham refused to play ball with the defender and his agent, Sky Andrew, who had demanded a clause in a new contract to give him the right to leave the club in 2002 if Spurs failed to qualify for the Champions League.

No club is likely to meet Campbell's wage demands in full, not least Arsenal, who expressed a clear interest in signing him, but made it clear that they would stay on the sensible side of £50,000 a week when negotiating wages.

Arsenal signed Jeffers, whose contract with Everton had a year to run, after the player refused to agree a new deal with the Merseyside club. Newcastle were also keen to sign the forward, whose arrival at Highbury raised questions about the futures of Sylvain Wiltord and Nwankwo Kanu.

Lampard's departure from West Ham was a sign of the problems at the club following the recent departures of his father, Frank Lampard senior (assistant manager), and his uncle, Harry Redknapp (manager), after a dispute over transfer funds.

West Ham were unable to prise Alan Curbishley or Alex McLeish away from Charlton and Hibernian respectively, while Steve McClaren, Alex Ferguson's assistant at Manchester United, had an eleventh-hour change of heart and preferred to join Middlesbrough, where Bryan Robson has quit.

Instead, West Ham went for Glenn Roeder as Redknapp's replacement. The former Watford and Gillingham manager was a coach at Upton Park last season, having previously worked under Glenn Hoddle in the England set-up.

At Old Trafford, the Manchester United board seemed to have patched up their differences with Alex Ferguson. The manager's salary has been raised for his final season in the job, after which it appears that he will be given a bigger role than had previously been proposed.

Bolton filled the third First Division promotion slot, behind Fulham and Blackburn, after they beat Preston 3-0 in the play-off Final at Wembley.

Manchester City start as favourites to be promoted back to the top flight next season. After the unceremonious sacking of Joe Royle, City have turned to a man who has been at a loose end these past few months: Kevin Keegan.

Larsson wins Golden Shoe

POSITION	NAME	CLUB	GOALS	LEAGUE FACTOR	POINTS
1	Henrik Larsson	Celtic (Sco)	35	1.5	52.5
2	Hernan Crespo	Lazio (Ita)	26	2	52
3=	Mateja Kezman	PSV (Hol)	24	2	48
3=	Raul	Real Madrid (Spa)	24	2	48
3=	Andrii Shevchenko	Milan (Ita)	24	2	48
6=	Jimmy Hasselbaink	Chelsea (Eng)	23	2	46
6=	Rivaldo	Barcelona (Spa)	23	2	46
8=	Sonny Anderson	Lyon (Fra)	22	2	44
8=	Sergej Barbarez	Hamburg (Ger)	22	2	44
8=	Enrico Chiesa	Fiorentina (Ita)	22	2	44
8=	Javi Moreno	Alaves (Spa)	22	2	44
8=	Ebbe Sand	Schalke (Ger)	22	2	44
13	Ali El Khattabi	Sparta (Hol)	21	2	42
14=	Gabriel Batistuta	Roma (Ita)	20	2	40
14=	Pauleta	Bordeaux (Fra)	20	2	40
16=	Yannis Anastasiou	Roda JC (Hol)	19	2	38
16=	Diego Tristan	Deportivo La Coruna (Spa)	19	2	38
16=	Ivor Gluscevic	Utrecht (Hol)	19	2	38
16=	Claudio Pizarro	Werder Bremen (Ger)	19	2	38
16=	Marcus Stewart	Ipswich Town (Eng)	19	2	38
21=	Marcus Allback	Heerenveen (Hol)	10	2	36*
21=	Christian Vieri	Internazionale (Ita)	18	2	36
23	John Carew	Valencia (Spa)	11	2	35.5**
24=	Okan Yilmaz	Bursaspor (Tur)	23	1.5	34.5
24=	Tomasz Radzinski	Anderlecht (Blg)	23	1.5	34.5

* Total includes 16 goals for Orgryte (Swe; factor 1) **Total includes 9 goals for Rosenborg (Nor; factor 1.5)

Henrik Larsson of Celtic has won the ESM Golden Shoe after scoring 35 League goals for the Scottish champions. The Swede beat off competition from Hernan Crespo, whose goal on the last day of the Italian season took him to within half a point of first place.

The ESM Golden Shoe will be awarded to Larsson at a gala evening in Monaco in August, to be organised by UEFA and ESM (European Sports Magazines).

SCOTLAND

Celtic hang on to Henrik

AFTER the euphoria of Celtic's remarkable domestic treble came doubts about the club's ambition, as the board of directors inexplicably appeared to be reticent about offering top scorer Henrik Larsson an extension to his contract at Parkhead.

The fans were furious at the prospect of losing the player whose 53 goals last season had been the major factor in the team's on-field revival. However, it was eventually announced that an agreement had been reached and that Larsson had pledged his future to Celtic until 2004.

Still at Celtic...Henrik Larsson

The 29-year-old Swede capped an exceptional season with two goals in the 3-0 Scottish Cup Final defeat of a woefully outclassed Hibernian.

Over at Rangers, manager Dick Advocaat hardly endeared himself to the fans by allowing midfielder Jorg Albertz to return to his native Germany. Albertz, now back at his former club, Hamburg, was one of the few foreign imports at Ibrox to adapt well to the Scottish style of play and he had become a cult figure among the supporters.

The German's departure is likely to be the first in a series of transfers as Rangers lick their wounds and regroup. Lorenzo Amoruso and Giovanni Van Bronckhorst are among those expected to move on.

Alan Fairley

WALES

Barry do the double

LEAGUE champions Barry Town completed the domestic double by beating Total Network Solutions 2-0 in the Cup Final. Jamie Moralee and Gary Lloyd bagged the goals late on.

The outcome was a personal triumph for Peter Nicholas, who was in his first season in management.

There have already been a number of coaching changes since the end of the season. Former Manchester United forward Peter Davenport was appointed team boss at Bangor City, replacing Meirion Appleton, now director of football at the club.

Steve O'Shaughnessy was dismissed by Oswestry Town and replaced by their director of football, Peter Hepper. O'Shaughnessy took over the vacant spot at Flexsys Cefn Druids, created by the resignation of Gareth Powell. Simon Dyer parted company with Port Talbot Athletic by mutual consent, and was replaced by Wayne Goodridge. Rhayader Town appointed Kim Bowley.

Caernarfon Town bounced straight back into the top flight by winning the Cymru Alliance (second level north).

Mel Thomas

N. IRELAND

Season ends with back-to-back defeats

A DISAPPOINTING season for the national team ended with two defeats in the space of four days. On June 2, in Belfast, an injury-depleted side lost 1-0 to Bulgaria, while an even weaker team went down 3-1 to the Czech Republic in Teplice four days later, conceding two goals in the last three minutes.

Domestically, a lack of finances has led to a dearth of activity in the transfer market. Glentoran midfielder Rory Hamill – banned until October by FIFA for a drug offence – has moved to Coleraine, while Linfield have released 32-year-old defender John Easton and 31-year-old midfielder Stephen Beatty.

Roy Kitson

Grasshopper champions, Trossero quits

Ivar von Rulach on a dramatic end to the season

SWITZERLAND

GRASSHOPPER claimed their 26th League title when thrashing 2000 winners St Gallen 4-0 away in the final round of the championship play-offs. This result, which also ended St Gallen's 36-match unbeaten home run, put the Zurich club out of reach of second-placed Lugano, who conspired to lose their last game 2-1 away to Sion.

Grasshopper's triumph was expected because of their rich vein of form during April and May in the eight-team play-off tournament. The big surprise came at international level, when Switzerland coach Enzo Trossero announced his resignation following the 1-0 World Cup qualifying defeat by Slovenia in Basle in early June.

The three points allowed Slovenia to leapfrog Switzerland into the play-off berth, while fourth-placed Yugoslavia are only two points behind the Swiss with a game in hand.

The likely failure to qualify for the finals was a key reason behind Trossero's decision to step down. But there have been other factors. The Argentinian received a hostile press for his perceived humiliating treatment of Ciriaco Sforza. The Switzerland captain of five years' standing returned to the national side after an injury-enforced lay-off to find interim skipper Stephane Henchoz confirmed in the post and Trossero declining even to discuss the issue of the captaincy with him.

Under-21 coach Kobi Kuhn has been unanimously elected as Trossero's successor by the FA's central committee.

Servette qualified for the UEFA Cup after an untroubled 3-0 triumph over Yverdon in the Swiss Cup Final. Bulgarian international striker Martin Petrov scored the second goal as a parting gift ahead of his move to Bundesliga side Wolfsburg.

On the coaching front, former national team boss Gilbert Gress has left FC Zurich, who finished bottom of the championship play-off table, while Lucerne's Andy Egli has been replaced by Pole Ryszard Komornicki, formerly with Second Division Solothurn. Sion coach Henri Stambouli has moved to Sedan in France.

Defeat too far...Trossero resigned after losing to Slovenia

After the promotion/relegation play-offs, Aarau, Neuchatel Xamax and Lucerne remain in the First Division, Yverdon were demoted, and former champions Young Boys promoted.

At the end of season awards ceremony, Grasshopper's Stephane Chapuisat was voted footballer of the year for the second time, and his team-mate Luca Deniola, an Under-21 international defender, named top youngster.

Big-money move...Jan Vennegoor

HOLLAND

Ajax in tax probe

AJAX'S delight at reaching the Champions League qualifiers soon evaporated when tax inspectors called at the club. The visit was part of an investigation into alleged irregularities relating to payments made to Michael Laudrup and Shota Arveladze.

The inspectors are looking into claims that Ajax gave tax-free sums to the players instead of declaring the payments as salary, which is taxable.

NAC Breda's accounts are also under scrutiny because of similar alleged malpractices relating to Arveladze's twin brother, Archil, now at Koln. The club were less than happy with the tax inspectors' timing, since they were still in shock at the death of Ferry Van Vliet. The 20-year-old midfielder had been killed in a car accident earlier that week.

On the pitch, Ajax appeared to have thrown away the chance of Champions League football next season when they lost at home to Feyenoord and Vitesse within a week. But on the last day they overtook Roda JC to take the third qualifying place.

Roda go into the UEFA Cup, along with the surprise of the season, Utrecht, who finished fifth. They will be joined by Cup winners Twente, who beat League champions PSV on penalties in the Final after a disappointing 0-0 draw.

Twente's Cup triumph served as a farewell present to coach Fred Rutten, who now becomes director of youth football at...PSV. Forward Jan Vennegoor of Hesselink is also making the same journey, having joined PSV for a record Dutch domestic transfer fee of £7million.

Klaas-Jan Droppert

BELGIUM

Red Devils give Waseige scare

THE doctors who told Robert Waseige to stay calm and not lose his temper following a recent heart bypass operation did well to absent themselves from Serravalle on the night that the Red Devils were threatened by the biggest upset of modern times.

With the score at 1-1 for 50 minutes Belgium, the Group 6 leaders, were in danger of losing to San Marino. Anxiety turned to desperation before they created the openings that secured a 4-1 victory, which brought more relief than satisfaction.

The comfortable 3-1 victory over Latvia four days earlier was more in keeping with what the doctors had presumably prescribed for Waseige.

On the domestic scene, Westerlo lifted the Cup for the first time when gaining an undeserved 1-0 win in the Final against Lommel. Jef Delen scored the goal in the 37th minute.

Lommel's consolation was promotion back to the top flight at the first attempt, after winning the Second Division title with much to spare. RWD Molenbeek will accompany them following their 4-1 win over Mons in the play-offs.

Turnout, one of the other promotion contenders, may now find themselves in the Third or even Fourth Division next season. They failed to meet a

May 30 deadline for settling 15-year-old tax debts of £100,000 and were refused a licence for next season. They have taken legal action to overturn the decision, but know that if this is unsuccessful their punishment could be a drop of two divisions.

Nicholas Harling

PORTUGAL

Santos steps down after Cup triumph

FC PORTO'S 2-0 win over Maritimo in the Cup Final confirmed the seasonal dominance of Oporto clubs on the domestic scene, following Boavista's championship triumph.

But there were no celebrations from Porto coach Fernando Santos, who stood down shortly after the Final having been criticised by certain board members because he had not achieved enough with the club.

Cup Final goal...Pena of FC Porto

A goal in each half, from top scorer Pena and Dmitri Alenichev, settled the outcome of the Final, and the victory meant Santos had won one League title, two national Cups and a Super Cup during his three-year tenure. But given Porto's high standards of recent times, even this amount of silverware has been deemed insufficient.

Former Sporting Lisbon coach Octavio Machado, a renowned disciplinarian, has now been appointed as Santos' replacement, with veteran Porto defender Aloisio handed an assistant role.

Meanwhile, Sporting themselves have a new coach, Ladislau Boloni giving up his role as Romanian national team boss to take over at the 1999-00 League champions.

Alberto da Silva

REP IRELAND

McCarthy's side still hold sway

NATIONAL TEAM manager Mick McCarthy should enjoy his summer holidays this year. The Republic of Ireland have now gone 12 games without defeat and stand three points clear at the top of their tough World Cup qualifying group as the campaign enters its final stages.

The Republic drew 1-1 at home to Portugal and beat Estonia 2-0 away in their most recent encounters to keep themselves on track for qualification. But one curious statistic from the campaign may cause concern – while Robbie Keane scored the first World Cup qualifying goal, against Holland last September, all the team's other 17 have come from midfielders and defenders.

Brendan Menton is the new chief executive of the FAI. The 49-year-old, who has been treasurer for the past five years, replaces Bernard O'Byrne, who quit following an investigation into his credit card expenditure.

Double winners Bohemians have parted company with their flamboyant manager, Roddy Collins, after he failed to show up for contract talks. His successor is Pete Mahon, Collins' assistant last season.

Sean Creedon

LUXEMBOURG

F91 number one again

F91 DUDELANGE held off the challenge of Grevenmacher to retain the championship by four points. Rodange, promoted last season, went straight back down, along with Wiltz. Swift Hesperange make a return to the top flight after winning the Second Division title ahead of Progress Niederkorn, who also go up.

Etzella Ettlebruck won the Cup in their first appearance in the Final, beating Wiltz 5-3.

Tim Brice

Pro-file Arjen Robben

Young Groningen talent lined up by PSV

DUTCH champions PSV Eindhoven are not content with present-day success. They play a good long-term game, too, and have demonstrated their foresight by seeing off a stack of rivals to secure pre-contract agreements with Emmen's Dutch Under-21 keeper Jelle ten Rouwelaar and Groningen attacking wonder boy Arjen Robben.

No wonder PSV chairman Harry Van Raaij looked so pleased with himself. From the summer of 2002, his club will have two fine young talents on their books, and in 17-year-old Robben he has acquired on a five-year contract one of the most exciting prospects to emerge from Holland in years.

It took the teenager just six months to become a familiar name in Holland's football community. Although he scored 50 goals for Groningen's youth team in 1999-00, Robben was still considered too raw for a shot with the professionals at the start of last season and did not even warrant a place in the official team photo.

However, he got his first-team chance last December, coach Jan Van Dijk selecting him to replace the injured Martin Drent for a key League match against Feyenoord. The result was sensational. Out on the left wing, Robben's pace and trickery terrorised the opposition, with experienced Dutch international defender Kees Van Wonderen particularly embarrassed by the youngster's flair. To seal a dream debut, Groningen pulled off a shock 1-0 win.

"A coach can be criticised for rushing things and bringing in a good youngster too early," said Van Dijk after the Feyenoord game. "Arjen is only 16. However, when you watch him in action, it's as if he's been with the first team for six months."

Robben's exceptional debut was no flash in the pan. He performed superbly throughout the second half of the campaign and was rightly voted the club's Player of the Season. Moreover, he is arguably not playing in his best position. In youth football, he excelled as a playmaker and a switch to such a strategic role is an option.

Just as impressive as his talent is his steady temperament and maturity. He does not play the star and insists he is pleased his £2.5million move to PSV will not come into effect for another year.

"It's too early to leave Groningen," says Robben, a current Dutch youth international. "I've made a lot of progress since my first-team debut, and here I have the chance to carry on with my development.

"In the next year, I want to prepare myself mentally and in a football sense for PSV and also finish my schooling. I could be badly injured tomorrow and my career would be over. That's why school is important."

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Groningen
Country Holland
Born January 23, 1984, in Bedum
Previous club VV Bedum

Hodgson steers FC Copenhagen to the top

Jim Holden witnesses an exciting finish to the domestic season

DENMARK

ROY HODGSON may have his share of critics in his native England, but he continues to prove his worth as a coach on foreign fields. In his first season in Danish football he has guided the super-rich but super-underachieving FC Copenhagen to the Superliga title.

It was a formidable success for 53-year-old Hodgson, who saw his excellent team clinch the title in the penultimate round of matches with a 3-1 home victory against city rivals Brondby in front of a sell-out 42,000 crowd at the Parken.

The quality of the deciding match was a fitting end to one of the best years of League soccer in Denmark, with substitute Pascal Simpson scoring the clinching third goal near the end.

FC Copenhagen defender Christian Poulsen, plucked from obscure Second Division club Holbaek a few months ago, put them ahead in the first half, and the contest seemed over when South African international Sibusiso Zuma scored the most stunning goal of the Superliga season – an overhead kick from the edge of the penalty box.

But Brondby roared back and Per Nielsen gave them hope with a firm header past former Everton goalkeeper Thomas Myhre. The visitors piled on the pressure in their search for an equaliser, but Simpson put the result beyond doubt, converting a pass from Zuma, undoubtedly the player of the Superliga season.

Hooligan clashes at a pub and railway station after the match introduced a sour note, but it could not dilute the thrill for FC Copenhagen, who achieved only their second title since they were created by a merger of KB and B1903 eight years ago. Hodgson played down his role, saying: "The players and fans have been outstanding. This is a big club, and now we have to try to show we can play well in Europe." But the fans and players of Denmark's biggest club have been paying huge tributes to the Englishman abroad.

Silkeborg won the Cup by beating AB Copenhagen 4-1, a small compensation for the Jutland club, who were also in the title race with two rounds of the 33-match season to go but lost 1-0 at home to Brondby. Last season's champions, Herfolge, were relegated, and will be replaced by Esbjerg.

Denmark's national side had a lot to crow about, with successive 2-1 home victories against the Czech Republic and Malta in the June World Cup qualifiers putting them top of Group 3. Jon Dahl Tomasson scored a deserved late winner against the Czechs in what may prove to be the key match of the group. Four days later, two goals from the in-form Ebbe Sand sealed a much more nervy win after the Maltese had the temerity to take an early lead.

Away win...Englishman Hodgson maintained his reputation abroad

At League level, Stabaek's Anders Linderoth became the second manager to resign this season, after only nine matches. The Swede stepped down after admitting that the 8-1 defeat by Brann in Bergen was unacceptable.

A couple of weeks later, Vidar Davidsen of Lyn also departed after failing to lift the newly-promoted side out of the relegation zone.

Gaute Larsen, Linderoth's former assistant, takes over at Stabaek, while Englishman Stuart Baxter was brought in from Sweden to manage Lyn.

Baxter got off to a good start, with Lyn breaking Rosenborg's run of eight consecutive wins by drawing 1-1 at home. This slip by the champions allowed Viking, still unbeaten after 10 games, to regain the lead following a 3-0 win at Stabaek.

Sigurd Odegaard

SWEDEN

Four-goal Larsson hits back

THE NATIONAL team's four straight wins in the World Cup qualifiers, including both of their June fixtures, suggest that happier times are back for Sweden.

The emphatic 2-0 victory over Slovakia in Stockholm was described by co-coaches Lars Lagerback and Tommy Soderberg as "our most important result yet", while the 6-0 drubbing of Moldova in Gothenburg four days later has gone some way to ridding Sweden of their reputation as a goal-shy outfit.

Heerenveen's Marcus Allback stole the show with both goals against Slovakia, but he was outdone by Henrik Larsson against Moldova, the Celtic forward scoring four times, three from penalties.

Amazingly, Larsson, fresh from his 53-goal haul for the Scottish champions, has had to endure some harsh criticism in his homeland. Just one goal in the previous World Cup qualifiers is hardly what is expected of the European Golden Shoe winner. "People have been saying that Larsson cannot score for Sweden," said the striker. "Tonight I hit four, but I believe that I have been useful to

Point saver...John Carew

NORWAY

Draws put an end to World Cup bid

THE national team's miserable run of World Cup results continued in June, with a goalless draw away to Ukraine, a game they should have won, and a 1-1 draw at home to Belarus, who they were expected to beat.

Norway have failed to win any of their seven qualifiers and cannot now reach the finals. While the team gave a solid defensive display against Ukraine in Kyiv, their poor finishing again let them down. Four days later, against Belarus in Oslo, Norway piled on the pressure from the first minute, but the visitors then scored from their first real attack, midway through the first half.

The home side reverted to the long-ball game in a desperate bid to salvage a point, and 10 minutes from the end John Carew spared their blushes with an equaliser.

Nevertheless, senior players such as Carew and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer have voiced their support for beleaguered coach Nils Johan Semb.

the team even when I haven't been hitting the net."

Soderberg paid tribute to the team's newcomers, notably Tobias Linderoth, whose influence in midfield is growing by the day.

In the League, IFK Gothenburg continue to set the pace, even after losing in-form midfielder Hakan Mild with a neck injury. The surprise packages have been Hammarby, especially since they have been experiencing financial difficulties.

Pentti Hietanen

FINLAND

Forssell's double not enough

FINLAND went agonisingly close to causing a major upset in the World Cup qualifiers after leading Group 9 favourites Germany 2-0 at half-time. But they had to settle for a 2-2 draw after goals from Michael Ballack, a penalty, and Carsten Jancker.

Mikael Forssell was the Finns' star of the show, scoring twice and tormenting the German defence throughout. "I knew I'd enjoy playing against Germany," he said. "When you come up against a 3-5-2 formation, there are always a lot of one-against-one situations, which suit me very well."

The Finnish camp fumed over the dubious penalty converted by Ballack which helped Germany back into the game. Central defender Sami Hyypia, who was adjudged to have floored Jancker in the box, was very critical of the big Germany striker.

"Jancker pushed and shoved all the time, then fell at the faintest of contacts," said the Liverpool stopper.

In the League, HJK are the early leaders, boosted by the goals of young Paulus Roiha.

Pentti Hietanen

ICELAND

Play-off hopes fading away

THE national team now have only a faint chance of taking the runners-up spot in World Cup qualifying Group 3, despite taking four points from their two recent games.

The 1-1 draw at home to Bulgaria was a bitter disappointment since Iceland had virtually controlled the game for 75 minutes. However, they failed to add to Rikhardur Dadason's 43rd-minute header and were forced to share the points when Dimitar Berbatov tapped in following a free-kick.

Four days earlier, Iceland completed the double over Malta, winning 3-0, again at home.

Apart from the blustery conditions, the real winner in both ties was Reykjavik's sorry-looking National stadium pitch, much of which currently resembles the set for a low-budget remake of *The Desert Song*. With large swathes devoid of grass, it must now be among the strongest contenders for the title of Europe's worst top-class playing surface.

Class act...Mikael Forssell

On the domestic front, reigning champions KR made a dreadful start to the new League season, and were second bottom after four games. Keflavik were the early leaders.

Rab Christie

Pro-file Anders Svensson

Sweden's goalscoring midfielder set to star for Southampton

AT LAST, the long-running transfer saga of Anders Svensson is finally over, with Premiership club Southampton paying Elfsborg £800,000 for the Swedish international attacking midfielder.

Stories about the 24-year-old's future have proved a staple diet for Swedish football journalists for quite some time. In November, he looked set to move to Sunderland, only for their manager, Peter Reid, to have second thoughts, while numerous clubs, including Fiorentina, Stuttgart, Monaco, Celtic and Benfica, were all said to be tabling bids.

There was even a report that Swedish side Malmo were hoping to recruit Svensson – using some of the £5.5million they received from Ajax for striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic. But no. The Elfsborg star had set his heart on moving beyond Scandinavia and after making a full recovery from a knee operation in April, he got his wish, signing a four-year contract with Southampton.

"It's a great feeling," says Svensson, a key figure in the Elfsborg team who beat AIK Stockholm on penalties in the 2001 Swedish Cup Final. "Southampton are a good club and they came in with an offer at the right time. They think I can make a good contribution. They want to make themselves a force in the Premiership and it's an attractive challenge. I used to support Liverpool but I'm a Southampton man now."

Most experts in Sweden would say Southampton have picked up a bargain. Svensson is full of energy and creativity, passes well and has a good goalscoring record for a midfielder – 43 goals in 182 matches for Elfsborg since joining them from Herstrafors in 1993.

He was justifiably voted the best midfielder in Sweden last season but is not yet an automatic choice for the national team, facing stiff competition from Niclas Alexandersson, Fredrik Ljungberg, Magnus Svensson, Daniel Andersson and Tobias Linderoth. However, he has certainly strengthened his case this season with a batch of crucial national team goals – in the 1-0 World Cup qualifying wins against Azerbaijan and Macedonia and the 2-0 friendly victory away to Switzerland this spring, scoring both goals.

"I feel I'm ready to take a big step forward in my career," says Svensson. "I don't want to be forever thought of as someone with promise."

He need not have too many worries on that score.

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Southampton (Eng)
Country Sweden
Born July 17, 1976, in Gothenburg
Previous clubs Guldhedens IK, Herstrafors IF, IF Elfsborg
International debut November 1999, v South Africa
International caps 17 (5 goals)
Honours Swedish Cup 2001

Fener's triumph ends in tears

Fans fail to persuade club president Yildirim to stay on, writes Hasan Cemali

TURKEY

A TEARFUL Aziz Yildirim announced his resignation as Fenerbahce president days after the club beat Galatasaray to win the Turkish title. Thousands of fans jammed a TV station's phoneline and gathered at the club pleading with him in vain to reconsider.

Yildirim stated after his side's dramatic championship win that he would assemble a squad capable of winning next season's Champions League. But later he explained that family and health considerations had forced him to step down. "I plead with the fans to leave me alone and respect this decision because it has also put me in a very difficult financial position," he said.

Flying the flag...two young Fenerbahce fans salute their side's title win

Yildirim, who goes for a check-up on his heart every three months, has a £17million bank guarantee in his name related to the transfers of key Fenerbahce signings Kennet Andersson, Nikola Lazetic, Zoran Mirkovic, Milan Rapajic and Haim Revivo.

The club won their first League title in five years with a 3-1 victory at Samsunspor on the final day, finishing three points ahead of Istanbul rivals Galatasaray, who had won the championship for the past four years. The two have now won 14 titles each, more than any other club.

Mustafa Denizli became the first Turkish coach to take Fenerbahce to the championship and the first Turk to win it since Trabzonspor's Ahmet Suat Ozyazici back in 1984.

Bursaspor's Okan Yilmaz finished League top scorer with 23 goals, one more than Gala's Brazilian striker Mario Jardel. Both are subject to transfer speculation. Okan has been in talks with Marseille, while Jardel appears set to return to Portugal, possibly with Sporting Lisbon. Gala are eyeing Dinamo Bucharest and Romania forward Marius Niculae as his replacement.

On the coaching front, Gaziantepspor have appointed former Siirt Jet boss Tevfik Lav after parting company with Sakip Ozberg. Lav's old club were relegated from the top flight, along with Erzurumspor and Adanaspor. Their replacements are Goztepe, Diyerbakirspor and Malatyaspor.

In the World Cup qualifiers, Turkey dropped two vital points at home to Macedonia in Bursa, needing a hat-trick from defender Alpay Ozalan to salvage a 3-3 draw after going 2-0 down in 20 minutes. Four days earlier, the team had an easier ride, beating Azerbaijan 3-0 in Istanbul. The Turks now trail Group 4 leaders Sweden by two points with three games remaining.

MACEDONIA

Sloga grab a hat-trick

SLOGA JUGOMAGNAT secured their third League title in a row after the most exciting of the nine championships to date went down to the final day.

The Skopje side, who led city rivals Vardar by two points going into the last round, got the draw they needed away to Belasica. Although Vardar beat Makedonija 3-2 away to draw level on points, Sloga's better head-to-head record during the season proved decisive.

Sloga's hat-trick puts them on a par with Vardar, who won the first three titles since independence (1993-95), and Sileks Kratovo (1996-98). However, the champions were denied the Double, which they won last season, after surprisingly losing 2-1 to Pelister in the Cup Final. Pelister captain Mitko Stojkovski, formerly with Red Star Belgrade, Oviedo and Stuttgart, ended his playing career in fairytale fashion by scoring the winner.

Tikves, Borec, Sasa and Shkendia HB were relegated, with Kumanovo and Napredok being promoted to the slimmed-down top flight.

New national boss Gjore Jovanovski, formerly with Sloga, started his reign with a disappointing 2-2 World Cup qualifying draw at home to Moldova. There was a marked improvement four days later as Macedonia battled to a 3-3 draw with Turkey in Bursa.

Michel Stojmanovski

YUGOSLAVIA

National side back on course

A 1-1 DRAW in Russia and a 6-0 win at home to the Faroe Islands put the struggling national team back on course to finish the World Cup qualifiers at least as runners-up.

The team, a blend of experience and youth, managed to restore some optimism and hope about the country's prospects. It remains to be seen who will coach them on a permanent footing, however, since the three-man caretaker team of Vujadin Boskov, Ivan Curkovic and Dejan Savicevic was initially appointed only for the two games in June.

Since then, the triumvirate's tenure has been extended while the FA awaits the outcome of its delayed elections. It is now likely the trio will be in charge for at least the next World Cup qualifier, at home to the Faroe Islands on August 15.

Vladimir Novak

● TIRANA gained some consolation for losing their **ALBANIAN** League crown to Vllaznia by thrashing Teuta 5-0, a Final record, to win the domestic Cup, *writes Gezim Nushi*.

Partizani and Erzeni were promoted to the top flight, replacing Besa and Skenderbeu.

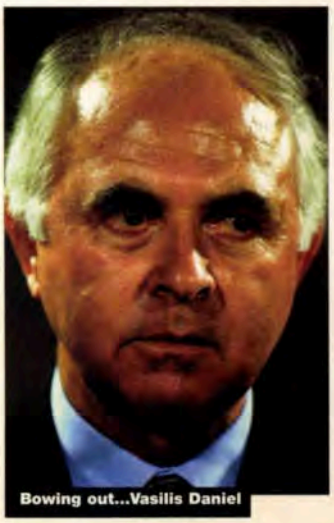
GREECE

England defeat spells the end

THE national team are almost certain to be watching the World Cup finals on TV again after losing 2-0 at home to England in a game they realistically had to win. Defeat left Greece, 1-0 victors over Albania four days earlier, four points behind second-placed England with two games left.

Coach Vasilis Daniel has confirmed he will step down in December, when his contract runs out, but the Greek soccer federation (EPO) has denied reports it is seeking former England manager Terry Venables to take the reins. PAOK coach Dusan Bayevic has also been linked with the post.

At club level, AEK Athens' new owner, Alex Sklavenitis, fired coach


Bowing out...Vasilis Daniel

Toni Savevski, citing the fact that he did not have a coaching diploma. Savevski, a former Macedonian international, joined the club midway through last season. His replacement is Fernando Santos, who recently resigned at FC Porto.

Lou Economopoulos

MALTA

Held takes the reins

FORMER German international Siegfried Held has been appointed national coach of Malta, following the dismissal of Josif Ilic.

The Yugoslav, who had held the post since July 1997, was sacked after the team lost 2-1 to Denmark in their June World Cup qualifier.

Held who played in the 1966 World Cup Final, won 41 caps and played 422 Bundesliga games before embarking on a coaching career that has led him to Austria, Japan and Egypt.

All-conquering Valletta completed a clean sweep by lifting the Super Cup, their sixth trophy of the season.

There have been major changes at League runners-up Sliema, with Ernest Barry, Carmel Busuttil and Martin Gregory retiring, while young forward Michael Mifsud is on the verge of joining Kaiserslautern.

As part of the rebuilding, Sliema have signed forward Danilo Doncic from Immortal Deportivo in Portugal. The Yugoslav still holds the Maltese Premier League single season goals record with 32, achieved with Valletta in 1996-97. Nigerian keeper Murphy Aganji has been bought to replace Barry.

Domenico Aquilina

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Cup follows League for Zeljeznicar

ZELJEZNICAR won the first unified Muslim-Croat championship and went on to do the Double by beating city rivals Sarajevo 3-2 in the Cup Final.

Zeljeznicar, who finished seven points clear of Brotnjo in the League, had to come from behind twice against Sarajevo before securing the Cup. Captain Dzelaludin Muharemovic scored the winner with 12 minutes to play, but was then sent off for his excessive celebrations.

Hanging up his boots...Carmel Busuttil

Michael Bowesfield

CROATIA

Hajduk break Dinamo's dominance

HAJDUK SPLIT won the League title by a single point, forcing Dinamo Zagreb, champions for the past five seasons, to settle for second place. Hajduk had to win on the final day to make sure of the trophy, and their 4-2 victory away to Varteks meant Dinamo's 6-2 home thrashing of Slaven Belupo was in vain.

Dinamo had the consolation of having beaten Hajduk to win the domestic Cup. They ran out 3-0 aggregate winners following a controversial two-leg Final. The first tie, played in Split, was interrupted for 20 minutes after angry Hajduk fans spilled on to the pitch late in the game with their side 2-0 down. In the return, Dinamo had Goce Sedloski sent off but an early goal from Renato Pilipovic put the Final's outcome beyond doubt.

Michael Bowesfield

● Long-time **SLOVENIAN** League leaders Olimpija Ljubljana lost the chance to break Maribor's stranglehold on the championship when managing only a 1-1 home draw with their rivals on the final day. The point brought Maribor their fifth successive crown.

Pro-file Bosko Balaban

Croatia's new goal king hungry for success

DINAMO ZAGREB forward Bosko Balaban could not have wished for a better inaugural season as a Croatian full international, scoring six goals in his first seven games and firing up his country's push for World Cup 2002 qualification.

During an impressive spell with the Under-21s, Balaban always looked likely to step up to the next level. Yet even his most ardent fans could not have expected him to start with such a flourish.

Fast, direct and adroit on the ball, the 22-year-old has looked tailor-made for international football from the outset. He marked his debut for Croatia with a goal in the 1-1 friendly draw against Slovakia in August last year and has proved a non-stop World Cup scoring machine ever since.

In March, he claimed a brilliant first-half hat-trick in the 4-1 win over Latvia in Osijek, then came a headed goal in the 4-0 romp against San Marino in June, and, four days later, the only goal in the return against the Latvians.

Croatia have been in urgent need of both fresh talent and legs. The enthusiasm and flair of Balaban are just the ticket. "Balaban has done everything I asked of him and more," says Croatia coach Mirko Jozic. "He's having a great run of goalscoring and his self-belief is growing with every game. He's creative as well."

Balaban's career kicked off at home-town First Division club Rijeka, but he was far from prolific, scoring just six times in his first 70 League games. It was only two seasons ago that he began to find his range, finishing as the top flight's third highest scorer with 15 goals.

That earned him a move last summer to the country's leading club, Dinamo Zagreb, where he struck up a fine understanding with Tomislav Sokota. The goals flowed – 20 for Sokota, the League's top scorer, and 14 for Balaban. But they were not enough for Dinamo to clinch their sixth consecutive League title – they finished a point adrift of champions Hajduk Split.

"I've always dreamt of being in a team that won the League, and twice I've come very close," says a disappointed Balaban. "It's very frustrating." He may soon be facing a new challenge since he has been linked with moves to Marseille, Real Madrid, Barcelona and Fiorentina.

The latter would be an enticing destination for Balaban. His idol is Gabriel Batistuta, so long a Fiorentina hero before moving to Roma. The Croat would surely jump at the chance of following in the footsteps of 'Batigol'.

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Dinamo Zagreb
Country Croatia
Born October 15, 1978, in Rijeka
Previous clubs Rijeka
International debut August 2000, v Slovakia
International caps 7 (6 goals)
Honours Croatian Cup 2001

Match-fixing claims mar finales

Dariusz Kurowski on an unsavoury end to the season

POLAND

Controversial comments...Wojcik

WISLA KRAKOW won the championship at a canter and also carried off the League Cup, while Polonia Warsaw lifted the national Cup, but the season's finales were overshadowed by new allegations of match-fixing.

During the second leg of the national Cup Final, Polonia fans welcomed their team by shouting: "Who has bought the game?" and waving enlarged photocopies of banknotes. Polonia had won the first leg 2-1 at Gornik Zabrze, but before the return, relegation-threatened Gornik had defeated Polonia 2-0 in a League match to move closer to safety from the drop. The Polonia supporters clearly thought that Gornik were about to let Polonia win the Cup second leg as thanks for Polonia 'throwing' the League game.

Whatever the truth, the Warsaw side held Gornik to a 2-2 draw in the capital to win the Final 4-3 on aggregate.

The focus on the alleged corruption within the game had intensified when Slask Wroclaw coach Janusz Wojcik, a former national team manager, was reported to have said that "six out of eight games in the League are fixed". Yet during an FA investigation into the allegations, he denied saying this.

Ironically, a few days later Slask won 3-1 away to Zaglebie having looked unlikely victors earlier in the game. Afterwards, furious home fans threw teargas into the dressing-rooms, forcing the players to spend more than an hour on the pitch.

Slask chairman Janusz Cymanek proceeded to sack Wojcik, claiming that "his comments have created a negative opinion of the club in the media".

Wisla enjoyed a very comfortable League run-in, finishing nine points clear of closest challengers Pogon to take the title for the seventh time. They then beat Zaglebie Lubin in the League Cup Final. At the bottom of the table, Orlen Plock and Ruch Radzionkow filled the automatic relegation berths, and will be replaced by RKS Radomsko, promoted for the first time, and KSZO Ostrowiec.

ROMANIA

Boloni departure a major blow

THE attempt to rebuild the national team in the wake of the retirements of Gheorghe Hagi and Gica Popescu suffered a blow when national team coach Ladislau Boloni quit his post to move to Sporting Lisbon.

Boloni had been attempting to integrate a new generation of players into the squad while still seeking to claim second spot behind Italy in World Cup qualifying Group 8. Victories over Hungary and Lithuania in early June put Romania in a strong position to claim that play-off place, but there is now a big question mark hanging over the team after Boloni's exit.

Hagi was the early favourite to replace Boloni, though he still has a year to run on his playing contract with Galatasaray.

On the domestic front, Steaua Bucharest won their 21st League title, beating city rivals Dinamo into second place. Transylvanian club Brasov finished third and will enter the UEFA Cup for the first time in 27 years.

Rocar Bucharest were relegated, along with Gaz Metan Medias.

Simon Evans

Tempted away...Ladislau Boloni

AUSTRIA

Karnten deny Tirol the Double

FC TIROL surprisingly missed out on the domestic Double after losing 2-1 to newly-crowned Second Division champions FC Karnten in the Cup Final.

The underdogs fully deserved their triumph over the League champions, winning in extra time with a goal from Mario Steiner.

Karnten are certainly a team to watch. They have ambitious right-wing politician Jorg Haider as club president and will certainly not be content with mere survival now that they have taken the place of relegated Linz ASK in the top flight.

Nick Bidwell

GEORGIA

Kaladze kidnap overshadows tie

THE run-up to the national team's home World Cup qualifier against Italy in Tbilisi was overshadowed by the kidnapping of Levan Kaladze, the brother of Georgia and Milan defender Kakha. At press time he was still held captive, with a ransom of £400,000 demanded.

On the domestic scene, Torpedo Kutaisi won the Double, finishing three points ahead of Lokomotiv Tbilisi in the League, and beating the same side on penalties in the Cup Final, following a 0-0 draw.

Vladimir Kalinkovich

BELARUS

Belshina shine in Final

BELSHINA BOBRUISK lifted the national Cup for a record third time after defeating League champions Slavia Mozyr 1-0 in the Final.

The game was goalless at full time, but six minutes into the extra period, Belshina midfielder Edward Gradoboyev converted Alexander Sednyov's perfect cross to bring his side a golden goal victory.

Alexander Traiduk has resigned as coach of Naftan-Devon after his side took just one point from their first seven games of the new League season.

Oleg Zadernovsky

UKRAINE

Levytskyi in, Karyaka out

NATIONALITY issues were the main focus of attention ahead of the recent World Cup qualifiers, with Ukraine finally winning the commitment of one Russia-based player but losing out on the services of another.

Moscow Spartak goalkeeper Maxym Levytskyi appeared for the final few moments of the 1-1 draw at home to Wales in Kyiv to end speculation about his international future.

The 28-year-old had been eyed by Russia but decided to commit himself to the land of his birth. Ironically, Levytskyi was suspended by former club Saint-Etienne earlier this season for utilising a fake Greek passport.

The keeper had appeared for Ukraine before, but only in friendlies, which did not rule out shifting allegiance to Russia.

The player that got away is Andriy Karyaka, a promising 23-year-old creative midfielder, who has rejected

Decision made...Maxym Levytskyi

the chance to play for Ukraine, despite having appeared for the country's Olympic side in a friendly against Bulgaria in 1999.

Karyaka, who plays for Russian top-flight side Kryliya Sovetov, was named in the Ukraine squad to face Norway and Wales. But he has apparently plumped for Russia, who also included him in their recent World Cup party.

There was also interest in the midfielder from Uzbekistan, who offered him a call-up last winter.

Karyaka is a product of the youth system at Ukrainian Premier League side Metalurh Zaporizha, arriving at Kryliya Sovetov via CSKA Kyiv.

Oleg Zadernovsky

SLOVAKIA

Top names take turn for the worse

INTER BRATISLAVA retained the League title, finishing six points clear of city rivals Slovan, to qualify for the Champions League once again.

However, the future is far from bright for two of the country's other big clubs. Spartak Trnava finished bottom and went down, while Kosice finished just one place above the drop zone.

The latter won the League in 1997 and 1998 when under the ownership of controversial businessman Julius Rezes. However, the club have suffered financial difficulties in recent years, the feeling being that Rezes's father, Alexander, may have overstretched himself by buying Sparta Prague, which he was later forced to sell. The Rezes family were key backers of ex-Slovak premier Vladimir Meciar, and since Meciar lost power their business interests have appeared to struggle.

Simon Evans

HUNGARY

Ujpest on a surge

THE title race looked set to go down to the wire, with Ferencvaros, Ujpest and Dunaferr all in the running.

Ujpest found their scoring form just in time for the championship run-in with a 4-3 win at Debrecen and a 5-3 home victory over Videoton. Key to the club's revival has been the form of skipper Florian Urban. The tough defender has bagged 15 goals this term.

Simon Evans

BULGARIA

Old faces return to CSKA

CSKA Sofia have appointed Asparuh Nikodimov as coach for the third time. He takes over from Italian Enrico Cattuzzi, who turned down a new one-year deal. Veteran Nikodimov led CSKA to the 1982 European Cup semi-finals in his first spell in charge.

Former international Yordan Lechkov was also set to return to the club, in a playing capacity, having retired from the game three years ago following a contractual wrangle with Turkish side Besiktas.

Simon Evans

CZECH REPUBLIC

Big Two name new coaches

SPARTA PRAGUE and Slavia Prague have both appointed new coaches, with former Jablonec boss Jaroslav Hrebik arriving at the former to replace Ivan Hasek, and Josef Pesice back at the latter as the permanent successor to Frantisek Cipro.

Pesice, who has just returned from a brief spell coaching in Costa Rica, led Slavia to their last domestic title and the quarter-finals of the UEFA Cup, both in 1996. He can now look forward to Champions League action after the club finished second to Sparta to book their qualifying round berth.

Simon Evans

Pro-file Cosmin Contra

Forward-thinking full-back with Milan in mind

AFTER A SEASON of under-achievement, Milan hope their new signing from Alaves, adventurous Romanian right-back Cosmin Contra, will be one of the men to spearhead a revival.

Contra, one of the leading lights of an Alaves side that came from nowhere to become a major force in Spain and Europe last season, is certainly worth the £7million forked out by Milan. His competitiveness and strong tackling should stiffen Milan's rearguard, while his attacking play has improved out of all recognition in recent years.

During Contra's early career, with Politehnica Timisoara and Dinamo Bucharest, it was widely felt that his distribution and crossing were not accurate enough. Such criticism is no longer valid. Since arriving at Alaves from Dinamo in summer 1999, the Romanian has developed into arguably the best attacking right-back in Spain.

This spring, as Alaves were en route to the UEFA Cup Final and a creditable mid-table finish at home, it seemed that everyone was a Contra fan. The likes of Juventus, Roma, Internazionale and Valencia were all said to be preparing bids, but what really excited him was the news that Real Madrid and Barcelona were in the hunt too.

"For a while I hoped to stay in Spain and play for Real Madrid or Barcelona," admits Contra. "But they didn't act fast enough. When Milan came in for me, I didn't need any convincing. My old Alaves team-mate Javi Moreno had just signed for them and he told me of their incredible training facilities at Milanello and that the people there were very welcoming. I've really grown up as a player in the last two years and I'm not at all apprehensive about playing for one of the biggest clubs in the world."

Contra does have a tendency to court unnecessary controversy, however. No doubt Inter fans will remember his recent dismissive comments about their club ("Inter have a lot of money but nothing else"), while in January he railed against what he perceives as refereeing bias in Spain. After a bad tackle by Real Madrid's Roberto Carlos on Alaves team-mate Antonio Karmona went unpunished, Contra stated: "It was one of the most brutal challenges I've seen in Spain. If I made a tackle like that I'd get a 10-match ban, but I'm Romanian and he's Roberto Carlos and plays for Real Madrid. They clamp down more on the smaller clubs, but it's like that in the world of football. The big teams have an advantage."

The Italian press will love him.

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Milan (Ita)
Country Romania
Born December 15, 1975, in Timisoara
Previous clubs Politehnica Timisoara, Dinamo Bucharest, Alaves (Spa)
International debut April 1996, v Georgia
International caps 25 (1 goal)

San Lorenzo outgun Big Two

Eric Weil on the final stages of the closing championship

Prolific...San Lorenzo's Bernardo Romeo (right) was top scorer in the closing championship

ARGENTINA

SAN LORENZO put an end to the recent Boca/River stranglehold on the national championship by winning the 2001 closing title. The club, from the Almagro district of Buenos Aires, finished on an 11-game winning streak to see off the challenge of 2000 closing winners River Plate.

The sides had been neck and neck with two games to go, but while River were beaten 3-2 by Huracan on the penultimate day, San Lorenzo defeated Boca Juniors 1-0.

San Lorenzo, 2-1 winners over Union Santa Fe on the final day, ended up taking the title by a six-point margin after a disheartened River Plate also lost their last game, 2-1 at home to Lanus.

It is San Lorenzo's first title since 1995, despite having been close to the top in many recent campaigns under the guidance of coach Oscar Ruggeri. Ironically, he resigned four months ago after falling out with club president Fernando Miele. Ruggeri's replacement, Chilean Manuel Pellegrini, made few changes in terms of players or tactics, but seemed to inspire new confidence in the squad.

The club also benefited from having the tournament's top scorer, Bernardo Romeo, in their ranks. He scored 15 goals in the 19-game programme. In addition, San Lorenzo had the advantage of making an early exit from the Libertadores Cup, while Boca and River were involved in the latter stages.

River coach Americo Gallego was fired for failing to deliver either the domestic title or the Libertadores (his side were eliminated by Mexico's Cruz Azul in the quarter-finals), yet he has hardly been helped by the club's board of directors. In recent seasons they have sold many of the best players while, at the same time, amassing debts of £35million.

By contrast, River's title bid was undoubtedly aided by a certain laxity on the part of the FA disciplinary committee. Under FA regulations, clubs are given penalty points for the bad behaviour of their fans and when their total goes above 12, they are supposed to have three League points deducted.

Three top-flight clubs – River, Racing Club and Los Andes – reached that point during the closing campaign, but while Los Andes, a small club, forfeited their League points straight away, helping to send them on their way to relegation, the penalisation of the two traditional clubs was left until a later date. Many observers suspected that punishment was withheld in River's case to ensure that the title race went to the wire, thereby maintaining crowd interest, while Racing's escape meant they avoided the relegation play-offs.

The long-drawn-out transfer of Boca's Juan Roman Riquelme to Barcelona has finally been completed despite the Spanish club's caretaker coach, Carles Rexach, expressing his doubts about the midfielder's capabilities.

BRAZIL

Teixeira stands accused

BRAZILIAN Football Confederation (CBF) statutes clearly prohibit any of its directors from receiving a salary. Yet in 1998, CBF president Ricardo Teixeira paid himself £42,300. Two years later, Teixeira's earnings had risen to £139,500.

The president's illegal pocketing of the CBF's money was revealed in the final, 700-page report of a Congressional commission of inquiry, which for the past six months has been investigating suspected irregularities in Brazilian football.

The report said that other leading CBF directors were also helping themselves to wages. In the document, commission general secretary Silvio Torres recommended that criminal charges be brought against 32 directors and agents, including Teixeira, who was accused of committing 13 criminal offences, mainly relating to tax evasion and breaking foreign exchange controls.

The report added that the CBF's expenditure had increased fourfold in the past four years and that on occasion the organisation had borrowed sums in the region of £7million from abroad at interest rates that were way above the normal level.

"The conclusion of this

Under fire...Ricardo Teixeira

investigation is that the CBF is being administered in the wrong way," it said. "Accountants say that if it were a company, it would have been insolvent at the end of 2000."

Sportswear giant Nike, whose sponsorship deal with the CBF had prompted the inquiry in the first place, got off fairly lightly. Torres said he could find no proof that Nike had forced Ronaldo to play in the 1998 World Cup Final hours after suffering a convulsive fit, though the report accused the national team management of lacking the necessary courage to drop the stricken superstar from the team.

It also criticised the deal for giving Nike too much say in the running of the side, citing the infamous incident during France 98 when Brazil shortened one of their training sessions to attend the opening of a Nike theme park. This was no light undertaking since it involved crossing Paris in the rush hour.

Six other CBF directors were accused of irregularities by the report, along with directors of state federations and agents.

Torres says he will hand the document to Brazilian public prosecutors, even though it was not officially approved by other members of the commission. This was because Congressmen allied to the CBF managed to get themselves voted on to the 48-man commission with the sole intention of obstructing its progress.

While all this was going on, the state championships were coming to an end. There was high drama in Rio de Janeiro where, for the third year running, Flamengo beat Vasco da Gama in the two-leg Final of the Carioca championship.

Flamengo snatched their title in dramatic style with a goal two minutes from time from Dejan Petkovic, giving them a 4-3 aggregate win. The Yugoslav's goal, a free-kick from 30 metres, must go down as one of the best ever scored at the Maracana.

Flamengo's win gave their irrepressible coach Mario Zagallo yet another title at the age of 69.

Over in Sao Paulo, Wanderley Luxemburgo celebrated his return to coaching by leading Corinthians to the Paulista title. The designer suit man, sacked by Brazil last September, took less than four months to win his first title – and spark yet more controversy, this time over the use of earphones. During the semi-final with Santos, Luxemburgo used

Top team...Gremio win the Gaucho

electronic equipment to pass instructions to two of his players, who wore earphones.

The coach claimed it was a technological advance that would benefit everyone; Santos, beaten by an injury-time goal, called it cheating. The CBF immediately slapped a ban on its use.

Gremio won the south's Gaucho championship, beating Juventude in the Final, but there was a surprise in Minas Gerais. There, the title went to America of Belo Horizonte, who beat favourites Atletico Mineiro 5-4 on aggregate.

The second leg began 30 minutes late as the two teams argued over who should sit on which bench. The delay caused the game to finish in pitch darkness as the Brazilian government had banned the use of floodlights due to an acute energy shortage in the country.

Brian Homewood

ROUND-UP

Thirteen-year-old plays in top-level game

FERNANDO RAFAEL GARCIA, just 13 years old, staked his claim to be the youngest player ever to appear in a top division match anywhere in the world when playing 23 minutes for **PERU'S** Juan Aurich in their 3-1 opening championship victory over Estudiantes in May. The centre-forward, a Peruvian Under-15 squad member, was put straight into the first team after being spotted during a youth tournament by Aurich coach Nedardo Arce.

Alianza Lima were on the verge of winning the opening championship, having established a five-point lead over Sporting Cristal with two games to go. Defending champions Universitario, struggling in mid-table, replaced coach Roberto Challe with Teddy Cardama.

URUGUAY: With two games to go in the classification stage, Penarol, Danubio, Juventud and Defensor had definitely qualified for the championship rounds, but defending champions Nacional were in danger of missing out.

CHILE: A number of players with the O'Higgins club were fired after they went on strike over non-payment of salaries. Their dismissal brought the threat of a general strike from the players' union.

Former Argentinian international Nestor Gorosito, currently playing for Universidad Catolica, has ended his 20-year playing career to become a coach.

BOLIVIA: Victor Hugo Antelo, who has scored 352 League goals, a world record for current players, has decided to retire at the age of 38. The former Bolivian international is with top division side Real Santa Cruz at present.

Popular club The Strongest moved up to mid-table in the closing championship after winning five of their first six games under new Argentinian coach Daniel Cordoba. Oriente Petrolero were leading with four games to go.

COLOMBIA: Three coaches were dismissed in less than a week as the opening championship entered its second half – Luis Suarez (Deportivo Cali), Gabriel Gomez (Bucaramanga) and Jairo Silva (Atletico Huila). Modest Tulua continued to top the table.

Quitting to coach...Nestor Gorosito

PARAGUAY: Newly promoted Libertad won the League section of the opening championship, a point ahead of another small club, Sportivo Luqueno.

The latter then came through the knockout stages of the tournament, booking a place in the Final against Cerro Porteno by beating champions Olimpia in the last four.

VENEZUELA: Caracas FC won the closing championship to qualify for the 2002 Libertadores Cup, together with second-placed Trujillanos.

Eric Weil

Familiar faces leave it late

Mark Gleeson reviews the final round of African Nations Cup qualifiers

THERE will a familiar look about the African Nations Cup finals in Mali next year, with 14 of the 16 qualifiers having been present at the last tournament in Ghana and Nigeria in early 2000.

Only Congo and Gabon are missing from that line-up, their places taken by hosts Mali and George Weah's Liberia. But it was a far from easy passage for many of the familiar faces this time round.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (who have won the Nations Cup twice, as Zaire), Tunisia and Zambia were among the last to book their places on a dramatic final weekend of qualifiers.

The Congolese nicked Group 6's second qualifying berth, behind Ghana, after beating Zimbabwe in a controversial game in Kinshasa. With Lesotho losing in Ghana, Zimbabwe needed only a draw to qualify, and they were leading at half-time after a soft goal from Benjamin Mwaruwaru.

But DR Congo came back into contention after the break with a dubious equaliser – Zimbabwe keeper Gift Muzadzi was adjudged to have carried the ball back over his goal-line – and won the game when Kanku Mulekelayi took advantage of a Jerry Tondelua miskick.

The result meant Zimbabwe once again missed out on qualification for the biennial tournament, but they had only themselves to blame. They had lost by an injury-time goal at home to Ghana a fortnight earlier.

Tunisia were bottom of Group 3 on goal difference going into the final weekend and Gabon's surprise victory away to group winners Morocco meant that Tunisia had to beat Kenya by two clear goals to go through. They quickly set about their business with three in the first half and one after the break to secure a 4-1 triumph. The youthful strike partnership of Ziad Jaziri and Ali Zitouni shared the goalscoring honours as the 1996 runners-up marched through.

In Group 1, Zambia went into their game in Madagascar needing to win, while a draw would have sufficed for the Indian Ocean islanders. But somehow Zambia extricated themselves from their poor form of the last year to win 1-0. Misheck Lungu's 11th-minute goal settled the encounter and there was the predictable riot by home supporters.

Togo had the best qualifying record, winning three of their four Group 5 games and conceding no goals.

Qualifiers: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon (holders), DR Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali (hosts), Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia.

Balancing act...Ziad Jaziri's two goals against Kenya helped Tunisia to the finals

CLUB COMPETITIONS

Raja make another early exit

MOROCCAN champions Raja Casablanca have again failed to make it through to the last eight group phase of the African Champions League after losing 3-2 to Democratic Republic of Congo side TP Mazembe Englebert.

Raja, winners of the inaugural Champions League in 1997 and again in 1999, lost 2-0 in Lubumbashi in the first leg and only managed to pull one of those goals back in the return, winning 2-1.

Striker Bouchaib El Moubarki had a penalty saved by Makwemi Mayala, the Mazembe goalkeeper, and the Moroccans missed a hatful of second-half chances. The defeat led to the resignation of coach Sylvester Takac.

Last year, when Raja were defending champions, they lost on the away goals rule in the second round to Senegal's Jeanne d'Arc and missed out on the competition's lucrative league phase.

Mazembe's success recalled their glory days of the 1960s and early 1970s, when they reached the Champions Cup Final four years running, winning it twice. Since then they have been in the doldrums until taking their domestic title last year.

Raja's elimination follows the surprise first-round defeat of defending champions Hearts of Oak, who were sensationally dethroned by Etoile du Congo.

A few other big names came close to tumbling out. Last year's runners-up, Esperance of Tunisia, had substitute Mourad Melki to thank after he scored the only goal of the second, home leg in the 89th minute against Tusker FC of Kenya. This levelled the aggregate scores at 2-2, to put the Tunis side through on away goals.

ASEC Abidjan, the 1998 winners, had an even narrower escape, overcoming Diaraf Dakar of Senegal only on penalties after the sides' 2-2 aggregate draw. ASEC's Ivorian international Losseni Konate made three saves in the 3-2 shoot-out win.

Konate had also been the hero in the first round, when ASEC again went through on penalties, against Stade Malien.

Chabab Belouzidad of Algeria and South African champions Mamelodi Sundowns extricated themselves from tight situations to also book their places in the last eight. Belouzidad overturned a 2-0 deficit from the first leg away to Al Merreikh of Sudan to win 3-0 in the return in Algiers.

Sundowns took a flimsy 3-2 first-leg lead to Tanzania for their return match against Young Africans in Mwanza but managed to come away with a 6-5 aggregate triumph. This was despite two late penalties by the home side's Edibilly Lunyamila and the theft of most of their playing kit before the game.

Sundowns, ASEC, Esperance and the Egyptian club Al Ahly play in the league phase again, as they did last year, with Belouizdad, TP Mazembe, Julius Berger of Nigeria and Angola's Petro Atletico as the four newcomers.

Petro ended the giantkilling run of Etoile du Congo with an emphatic 6-3 aggregate win in the second round.

Mark Gleeson

ROUND-UP

Uganda disbanded

UGANDA disbanded their team and fired Nigerian coach Harrison Okagbue after the 3-0 African Nations Cup qualifying defeat by Togo. A panel of 10 coaches has been appointed to oversee the running of the team. The loss to Togo came after five players walked out on the eve of the match in Kampala in a wrangle over unpaid fees.

Elsewhere in **EAST AFRICA**, Jeremia Randriambololona was fired as national coach of **MADAGASCAR** after his side lost to Tunisia in a World Cup qualifier. Former captain Etienna Haja Rasaonaivo has been appointed as his replacement.

CENTRAL AFRICA

Cotonsport Garoua were seven points clear at the top at the halfway stage of the **CAMEROON** championship.

The qualifiers for the **DR CONGO** national championship are AS Ndombe (Bandundu provincial league), FC Lumiere (Equateur), IC Onatra (Bas-Congo), DC Motema Pembe (Kinshasa), FC St Luc (Kasai Occidental), AS Bantous (Kasai Oriental), FC Lupopo (Katanga), as well as defending champions TP Mazembe Englebert.

Coming home...Mohamed Emara

NORTH AFRICA

LIBYA'S federation dismissed all the players who started the Nations Cup qualifier at home to Ivory Coast, which ended in a 3-0 defeat.

EGYPTIAN internationals Mohamed Emara and Yasser Radwan, currently at Bundesliga club Hansa Rostock, are to rejoin Cairo side Al Ahly after the African Nations Cup finals next year.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Orlando Pirates won the **SOUTH AFRICAN** championship for the first time in seven years, dethroning Mamelodi Sundowns, who had taken the three previous titles. Sundowns lost their last chance for a place in African competition in 2002 when they were surprisingly beaten 1-0 by Santos in the Super Bowl Final.

Costa do Sol are champions again in **MOZAMBIQUE**, clinching the title with two rounds to play.

MALAWIAN international Ernest Mtawali is threatened with deportation from South Africa after government officials found six false identity books in his possession.

WEST AFRICA

MALI have replaced Guinea as hosts of November's Amilcar Cabral Cup, the annual tournament for far-West African nations.

TOGO international Kossi Kodjovi has been suspended by FIFA after breaching his contract with Tunisian club ES Jerba. However, FIFA has lifted a similar ban on Djibril Soumah of **GUINEA**, who returned to EM Mahdia of Tunisia after disappearing without leave.

In **NIGER**, four clubs from Niamey – Olympic, ASFAN, ASFINS and Sahel SC – have ended their feud with the national federation and will rejoin the championship.

Mark Gleeson

Lively France-born forward tempted by the Elephants' call

DAGUI BAKARI has been flirting with the Ivory Coast national team for several months, but has yet to make a final decision on where his international future lies.

The 26-year-old forward, born in France of Ivorian immigrants, earned his fair share of headlines last season. His club, newly promoted Lille, remained in contention for the title until a few weeks from the end of the campaign. Their success ensured a new-found prominence for Bakari and held out the possibility, however remote, of him earning a call-up to the French national team.

Understandably, the Ivorians have been courting the striker for a while but he continues to vacillate as he ponders the possibilities.

Certainly, as the Ivorians' chances of qualifying for next year's World Cup finals improve, so the possibility that he will soon line up for the Elephants grows more likely.

Bakari's parents, who originate from Guiberoua, have been in France for 30 years but still have a connection with their homeland. "My parents have never cut their links with Ivory Coast and go back there from time to time," says Bakari, whose brother Oumar plays for French Second Division side Wasquehal.

Dagui's career began as a 17-year-old at Romainville. He then spent two years in the National League (third division) with Noisy-le-Sec, the closest thing there is to an all-African club in France. A short and unhappy spell followed at Amiens, before he moved on to spend three years with Le Mans.

Lille bought Bakari in 1999, and he became part of their promotion-winning side. "Bakari plays a big role for me," says the club's Bosnian coach, Valid Halilhodzic. "He has a superb spirit and is always ready to work for his team-mates."

Bakari was invited several times to join up with the Ivory Coast national team when Robert Nouzaret was coach but always cried off, either because of injury or club commitments. Nevertheless, he claims he is ready to play, saying: "I've never refused to play for the Elephants, it has just been a question of timing. Even though I wasn't born in Ivory Coast, it is important to me. I know a lot of the players and I know the potential for African soccer is enormous."

Mustapha Hadji had a similar dilemma when the French Under-21s wanted him in 1993. He chose Morocco instead and has been to two World Cups since. It might be an example the Ivorians could point out to Bakari.

Mark Gleeson

Fact file

Club Lille (Fra)
Country Ivory Coast
Born September 6, 1974, in Paris
Previous clubs Noisy-le-Sec (Fra), Amiens (Fra), Le Mans (Fra)

Suwon reach summit in rapid time

Michael Church reports on the South Korean side's Club Championship triumph

Asia's finest...Suwon lift the Club Championship trophy

SOUTH KOREA'S Suwon Bluewings emerged triumphant from the battle of the World Cup co-hosts, defeating Japan's Jubilo Iwata on home soil in the Asian Club Championship Final to win their first continental title.

The only goal was scored by 21-year-old Brazilian Sandro Cardoso after just 15 minutes, bringing Suwon victory over a Jubilo side who were appearing in their third consecutive Final.

The South Koreans' triumph puts them on course to challenge Jubilo's position as Asia's top club side, impressive development given that they were formed just over five years ago.

Suwon's then backers, Samsung, committed millions of pounds to secure the services of South Korea's 1994 World Cup coach Kim Ho and a host of young Korean stars such as Ko Jong-su, the nation's self-styled *enfant terrible*.

"I'm more satisfied with this than I was when I took the national team to the World Cup," said Kim after his side had won the Club Championship in their home city. "I'm very honoured to be champion and honoured to introduce Korean football to the world as a representative of Asia."

In 1996, the club's first competitive season, Suwon won the Korean FA Cup and the following year reached the Asian Cup-winners Cup Final, only to lose to Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr. But the club put that defeat behind them, going on to win the Korean League title in 1998 and 1999.

Last year Suwon lost out to rivals Anyang Cheetahs in the domestic championship, and won only the season-opening Adidas Cup. This season, though, Suwon seem to be back on track. They won the Adidas Cup again before squeezing past Iran's Pirouzi in the semi-finals of the Asian Club Championship.

A goal by Hamed Kavianpour looked to have given the Persians a place in the Final for the first time, but late strikes by Seo Jung-won and Park Kun-ha sent Suwon into the decider.

Jubilo had struggled to reach the Final, needing a golden goal winner from substitute Jo Kanazawa to see off Kazakhstan's Irtysh Pavlodar in the semis, also held in Suwon.

One of Jubilo's best players, Toshiya Fujita, picked up a yellow card in that tie, meaning he was suspended for the Final. The Japanese were also missing the injured Hiroshi Nanami, another key factor that allowed Suwon to take charge of the decider.

After Cardoso had scored, Jubilo never looked capable of breaking through a defence superbly marshalled by Zoltan Sabo.

Suwon's opponents in the Asian Super Cup will be Saudi Arabia's Al Shabab, who defeated Dalian Shide 4-2 in the Cup-winners Cup Final. A hat-trick by Abdullah Sheehan helped bring victory over the Chinese, who were forced to field eight players under 21 due to national team call-ups and injuries.

Dalian had overcome defending champions Shimizu S-Pulse of Japan in the semi-finals, with a Hao Haidong golden goal securing a 3-2 win.

Al Shabab, meanwhile, knocked out Iran's Esteghlal, also with a 3-2 win, Khalid Al-Dossary scoring the winner three minutes from time.

Kazakhs resign from AFC

KAZAKHSTAN have formally resigned from their membership of the Asian Football Confederation as they seek to join UEFA. The former Soviet republic left the AFC after announcing a desire to join the European confederation, formally notifying the Asian body having made an initial request to leave during the confederation's executive committee meeting in May.

"We are not surprised by the resignation as Kazakhstan had earlier expressed its intention to leave the AFC," said general secretary Dato Peter Velappan. "We said then that it was Kazakhstan's right to seek membership in UEFA and therefore have no objection to the notice of resignation received today. We hope that UEFA will now accept Kazakhstan as a member."

The country joined the AFC in 1994.

Michael Church

JAPAN

Ardiles ousted

OSSIE ARDILES' reign at Yokohama F Marinos finally ended on May 31, with the Argentinian being dismissed after he refused to resign. The cause is reported to have been a series of disputes over buying reinforcements for the team. Ardiles is replaced by club technical director Yoshiaki Shimojo.

"It's a pity it had to end like this," said the 1978 World Cup winner, "but I want to thank all the players, staff and supporters who have all fought so hard for the club."

Ardiles led Marinos to the J.League's First Stage title last year but they have struggled this season. The transfers of Yoo Sang-chul to Kashiwa Reysol and Atsuhiro Miura to Tokyo Verdy 1969, plus injury to 2000 J.League Player of the Year Shunsuke Nakamura, have cost the team dearly.

Meanwhile, Steve Perryman, Ardiles' old partner at Tottenham and Shimizu S-Pulse, has returned to Japan, to assist Kashiwa Reysol coach Akira Nishino. The team have lost their way this season and were languishing in seventh place before the break for the Confederations Cup.

Dragan Stojkovic is building up to a grand finale to his playing career. He leaves Nagoya Grampus Eight at the end of the First Stage and will also have a big farewell at the Kirin Cup, when Japan play his native Yugoslavia in Oita on July 4.

Grampus have signed Marcelo Silva Ramos from Cruzeiro to replace Stojkovic.

Mike Plastow & Yumiko Nagae

End of an era...Ossie Ardiles

ROUND-UP

Karimi opts for UAE

IRANIAN international Ali Karimi has rejected a five-year contract worth £4.3million from Atletico Madrid to join Dubai-based Al Ahli. The UAE club offered the forward, currently with Pirouzi in Iran, a one-year contract worth £290,000, with an option to extend for a second year.

Karimi's international team-mate Karim Bagheri has left English top-flight side Charlton Athletic after an unsuccessful season.

Muktijoddah KC clinched their second **BANGLADESH** Federation Cup title, beating Arambagh KC 3-0 in a rain-drenched Final. Midfielder Motiur Munna opened the scoring in the first half, with Nigerian forward Emeka getting the other two goals after the break.

Nguyen Ngoc Tho scored a golden goal one minute from the end of extra-time to give Ho Chi Minh City Police a 2-1 victory over Hanoi Police in the **VIETNAMESE** FA Cup Final.

OMAN will not be coached by Milan Macala in the second phase of Asia's World Cup qualifying tournament. The Czech guided the tiny Gulf state through the first round group but then left to take a post with Dubai club Al Nasr. German Bernd Stange, who has been at Perth Glory in Australia since 1998, is the new man in charge.

The stadium in the Sikkim town of Namchi has been named after **INDIAN** international striker Bhaichung Bhutia in recognition of his footballing achievements.

Meanwhile, there have been some significant transfer deals in the country since the end of the season. FC Cochin striking duo I M Vijayan and Joe Paul Anchery have joined Calcutta side East Bengal, while Mahindra & Mahindra of Bombay signed Khalid Jameel from Air India, Suresh and Noushad Pyari from Mohun Bagan, and Nazeem Akhthar from East Bengal.

An injury-time winner from Burundi's Jumaa Moussa gave Al Ain a 3-2 victory over Al Shabab in the **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES** Cup Final.

The UAE's FA chairman Sheikh Saeed bin Zayeb Al-Nahyan has backed new national team coach Abdullah Saqr as the nation prepares for the second phase of Asia's World Cup qualifying tournament.

Honoured...Bhaichung Bhutia

The Al Kuwait club won the **KUWAITI** League for the first time in 22 years, finishing four points ahead of defending champions Al Salmiya.

The **THAI** government has presented the FA with £160,000 as reward for the national team's achievement in reaching the second round of Asia's World Cup section.

SOUTH KOREAN international defender Hong Myung-bo became the nation's most capped player of all time during the Confederations Cup, taking his tally to 123, two more than Cha Bum-kun.

UZBEKISTAN international Igor Skvyrin has retired at the age of 38. The forward led his country to the gold medal at the Asian Games in Hiroshima in 1994.

Christopher Monfort, the **PHILIPPINES'** FA general secretary since 1995 and part of an emerging group of young Asian football administrators, has died following a road accident at the age of 42.

Michael Church, Azam Mahmood & Bhasi Malaparamba

CROSSWORD

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The authority..

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SEND YOUR ENTRY TO: JULY CROSSWORD, *World Soccer*, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS.

ACROSS

1 Mexico's national coach, 1997-2000 (8)
7 Much-respected central defender of Lazio and Italy (5)
8 ----- Fusion, Florida's MLS side (5)
9 Goalkeeper of Velez Sarsfield and Chile (5)
10 Coach appointed by Alaves in 1997 (4)
13 England striker who won the 2001 FA Cup Final for Liverpool (4)
14 Argentinian midfield star with Lazio (5)
17 Young Chilean midfielder hoping to make his name with Sporting Lisbon (5)
18 Pablo's defensive midfield partner at Alaves (5)
19 Ex-Groningen Brazilian who joined his namesake at Feyenoord (8)

DOWN

1 1998 French League champions, now to be coached by Patrice Bergues (4)
2 Former Uruguay coach replaced by Victor Pua (10)
3 Veteran Italian midfielder who recently completed a stint with Derby (6)
4 Ex-Dortmund forward of Koln and Germany's Under-21s (4)
5 African nation expelled from the current World Cup qualifiers (6)
6 Lebanese match-fixers dispossessed of their recent League title (7,3)
11 Romanian full-back prominent in Alaves' UEFA Cup heroics (6)
12 Barcelona's young Dutch winger (6)
15 Young Arsenal full-back capped by England last season (4)
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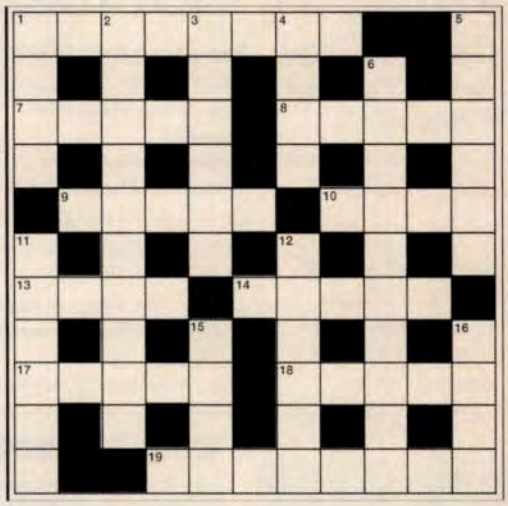

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Brian Glanville's LAST WORD

'Surely the Confederations Cup is another sheer superfluity'

FIFA tournaments fail the test

WAS Sepp Blatter merely voicing yet another bad idea or was he simply trying to send up a smokescreen less than a week before he was due to face the FIFA executive committee in Zurich over the scandalous collapse of ISL? His statement that the concept of staging the World Cup every two years should be "taken out of the safe" seemed as gratuitous as it was arbitrary, as daft as it was irrelevant.

At least another of Blatter's aberrations, the World Club Championship, bit the dust when Brazilian marketing firm Traffic failed to sell the TV rights. Plenty was lost in 2000 when that half-baked tournament was staged in Brazil, and Manchester United, dragooned into going, still bear the scars.

And what price the Confederations Cup, one of the ineffable Joao Havelange's concoctions? Surely it is another sheer superfluity. The recent version, in South Korea and Japan, was lopsided to a degree.

The *reduction ad absurdum* was surely reached when, before the Final, Hidetoshi Nakata, Japan's best player, announced that he would not play for his country in the Sunday Final, but would go back to Rome, and participate in Roma's Serie A match in Naples.

This is all rather strange, since, as the Japanese team's coach, Philippe Troussier, seemed to assume, the Confederations Cup was an official tournament (however superfluous), which thus gave countries priority over clubs. The plot thickened with the knowledge that Roma, anyway, could surely have got along without Nakata. Although the midfielder has scored some important goals for his club on their way to the *scudetto*, Roma have largely deployed him as a substitute.

Brazil sent a scratch team to the Confederations Cup and they looked pretty toothless when Sonny Anderson dropped out injured. They then lost 1-0 to Australia in the meaningless third-place match. Of that whole team only Anderson and the lively attacking left-back Leo (and Brazil have dozens of them) seemed likely candidates for a place in the ailing top side.

'Blatter's statement about reconsidering staging the World Cup every two years was as daft as it was irrelevant'

Been and gone...Nakata faced Cameroon in the Confederations Cup but left before the Final

France brought a very strong contingent, even without Fabien Barthez, Zinedine Zidane, David Trezeguet and Thierry Henry, but made 11 changes in the game they lost, second time out, to Australia.

As for the Aussies, they too lacked a cutting edge, which would surely have been provided had Leeds United's Harry Kewell and Mark Viduka been available. In the semi-final they notably failed to take advantage of the fact that Japan were down to 10 men for most of the second half.

Viduka refused not only to play in that competition but also in the Oceania qualifying play-off for the World Cup, though he graciously said he would be prepared to appear for Australia if they beat New Zealand in that fixture and therefore go on to meet the fifth-placed team in the South American section. Which could even be Brazil!

I do, however, have sympathy with Viduka when he deplores the way the winners of the Oceania group are forced to play-off at all, and at the decision of the Australian federation to stage the Oceania play-off during the English summer.

Safe to cross?...Stefan Effenberg

Talking down the commentators

SOME years ago, a leading American TV sports executive, nicknamed Red as I recall, lamented that while the technology got better and better, there was little you could do about the commentators. Alas, how true. Of late I have been obliged to listen to a great many of them and the wince factor has been strong.

One of the chief curses is the endless spewing out of semi-relevant information while the game is in progress. This fault is exacerbated by the fact that too often now there is a co-commentator who puts in his pennysworth, time and again distracting the viewer from what is going on, however significant and worthy of commentary.

Then there is the problem of pronunciation. What induced Gary Bloom and his colleague, Ray Houghton, to call the young Brazilian midfielder Ramon 'Hamon' during the Confederations Cup? There may be slight impurities in the *carioca* pronunciation of the 'r', but whoever heard of Hio de Janeiro?

This reminded me of another solecism, years ago, when certain smart alecs on ITV, learning that the River Plate pronunciation of the Spanish double 'l' was a corrupt 'je' sound, decided to apply it to the single 'l' as well, thereby making utter fools of themselves. And what about the commentators who insisted on calling Valencia's Vicente 'Vichente', as if he were Italian. It's either 'Visente' or 'Vithente'.

Moving on from pronunciation, I still relish that moment when an ITV commentator called Bayern Munich's Stefan Effenberg "the Belisha beacon of his team"! And there was I thinking he was mobile.

TV commentators, however crass, are the merest of irritants by comparison with the bellowing birdbrains who torment us from the loudspeakers at FA and Football League games in Cardiff's Millennium stadium. Booming banalities, they assault the eardrums, as indeed does the horrible rock music (music?) which pours out of the tannoys.

I thought the FA man at the Cup Final was bad enough – nightmarish memories of Wembley were revived – until I heard the fortissimo inanities of the disc jockey, or whatever, employed for the Third Division play-off Final between Blackpool and Leyton Orient.

Had he at some time been a Butlins redcoat? Was that why he treated and patronised the fans as a bunch of morons? Did he yearn to promote a knobbly knees contest? Questions that flickered through one's dazed mind as one tried, over the vile cacophony of sound, to dictate one's match report. Hell must be pretty much like this.

Mistaken identity

THE *Sunday Telegraph* sports section recently informed its readers that the late Waldir Pereira, alias Didi, was Brazil's goalkeeper when they won the World Cup in 1958 and 1962.

Gilmar must have been interested.

Winners...Gilmar (back row, far right) and Didi (front row, second left) in Brazil's 1958 line-up

Some justification for Campbell's demands

COLIN SHINDLER, the TV writer-producer, has done a vast amount of research on his new book, *Fathers, Sons and Football* (Headline, £14.99), and he plainly couldn't bear to let go of the exhaustive information he dug up about the father of the title, an obscure footballer called George Summerbee, whose son Mike and grandson Nicky have far exceeded his modest playing achievements.

As an evocative picture of what life was like for the journeyman professional before and just after the last war, however, the book is all too persuasive. It brings into perspective the present explosion of players' salaries in Britain.

It is all very well for David Buchler, the Tottenham vice-chairman, to excoriate Sol Campbell for demanding such enormous sums of money, but what of all those decades in which clubs paid players a pittance, despite the vast crowds going to games?

Jimmy Guthrie figures prominently in the book. He it was who captained Portsmouth to victory in the 1939 Cup Final and who, after the war, became a bellicose but unsuccessful leader of the old Players' Union.

Footballers just weren't ready for him. I remember Arsenal's Walley Barnes assuring me with disapproval that you simply couldn't go in and thump the table like that!

It's been pointed out that Buchler's self-righteous condemnation of former Tottenham manager George Graham for supposedly revealing the secrets of the confessional sat strangely with his own disclosures over Campbell's demands. It's also been logically said that, given the Bosman decision and its aftermath, Campbell may well have been entitled to ask for what he did at another club, given the fact that he would have arrived for no transfer fee.

Looking for a rise...Sol Campbell

From the archives...

July 1983

IF YOU were looking for news and comment about Brazil's international scene, the issue of 18 years ago this month was a boon. Jonathan Shallard's review of the World Youth Cup in Mexico was headlined 'Brazil can entertain...and win', and in Geovani Silva, the scorer of the Final's only goal – against Argentina – they had the tournament's outstanding player.

Yet, according to Eric Batty, the senior national team would have been a "big disappointment" to anyone who saw their June performance away to Wales. It came just a year after Brazil's all-out attacking displays at the 1982 World Cup finals, but Batty, having witnessed a recent training session, was primed not to expect a repeat performance.

One major reason was that Brazil were now in the charge of Carlos Alberto Parreira, who took over from World Cup boss Tele Santana. "In the World Cup in Spain, everything was aimed at attack. The defence was not organised at all," Parreira told Batty. "And the players were under orders never to commit deliberate fouls in any circumstances. I have reversed that."

Continuing the Brazil theme, there was a report on 30-year-old Zico's shock transfer to Udinese, Bebeto, another star of the Youth Cup, was earmarked as a national team replacement for Zico, and Careca was termed the "latest sensation in the lion's den of Brazilian soccer".

But the battle for supremacy was already over, as far as the English Football Writers' Association was concerned. Its members had just named Pele the Footballer of the Century – a full 17 years before the deadline.

Elsewhere in the issue, there was a profile of FC Porto's Mickey Walsh, the "first and only British player in Portuguese football". The move had proved a great success for the former Blackpool, Everton and QPR forward. He had just finished a third season with Porto, forming a prolific partnership with Manuel Gomes.

Indeed, Gomes won the European Golden Boot with 34 League goals that season. Eight behind him, in joint fourth, was Watford's Luther Blissett, who also featured on the cover, displaying his attacking arts against Nottingham Forest.

Blissett had recently won his ninth England cap on their disappointing tour of Australia, but his international appearances were soon to dry up. By contrast, Austria keeper Friedl Koncilia already had 70 caps to his name and was eagerly looking forward to fulfilling his unusual goal – to bow out on 99. "Plenty of players have reached 100 and then retired," said Koncilia. "But nobody has gone out on 99. That's my ambition."

As it turned out, he fell short by 15, winning his 84th and final cap in 1985.

Friedl Koncilia . . . playing on.

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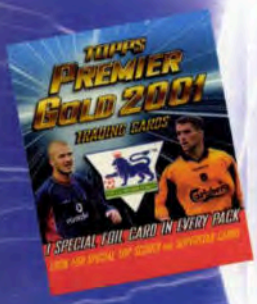

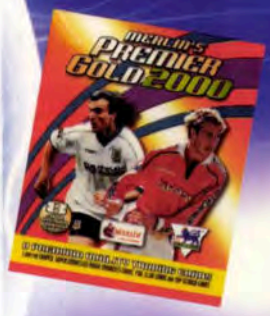

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